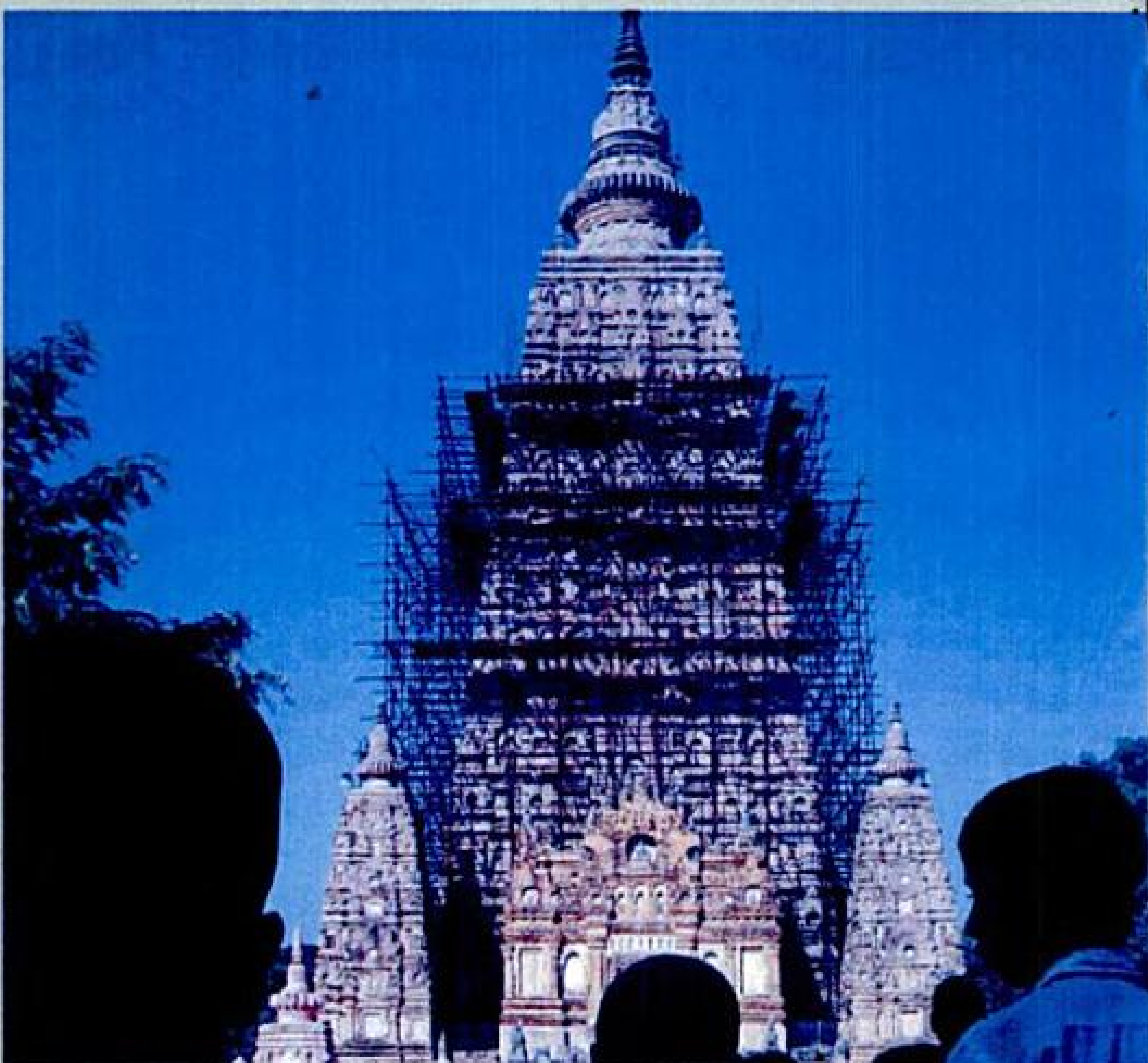
STUDIES IN INDIAN HISTORY

Bihar Through the Ages

STUDIES IN INDIAN HISTORY



VOLUME

1

Editors

S.R. BAKSHI • RITU CHATURVEDI

This encyclopaedic study on Bihar has been well-knit and weaved into four volumes having deep bearing on the subject in question. In fact some aspects like socio-economic, cultural and political have been taken of at various levels. Undoubtedly the material used is useful for teachers, researchers, statesmen, students, political leaders and others. However, some material has been taken up from the writings of eminent authors to fill up gaps in these volumes. We are grateful to them.

Volumes I to IV give us a vivid picture of several developments through the ages. In fact this material has been gathered from the scattered articles, papers and writings and we have given our assessment making it a useful study

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BIHAR THROUGH THE AGES

Volume – 1

LAND AND THE PEOPLE

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Contents

Preface

Weaved into four volumes, this encyclopaedic study has surveyed the socio-economic, cultural and political history of Bihar through the ages. Indeed the role of this region in all the phases of the freedom struggle is fairly comprehensive and historic. Satyagrahis were led in a disciplined way by the eminent leaders. The repressive policy of the British bureaucracy was borne by men, women, peasant, labourers, lawyers, teachers and students. They always had a smile on their lips and never showed any kind of anger.

The encyclopaedia has been weaved into four comprehensive volumes having deep bearing on socio-economic and political history of Bihar through the ages.

Volume I is based on land and the people, the Provincial Government under the Act of 1919, Champaran and the Civil Disobedience Movement, the working of the Provincial Government under the Act of 1935 and social changes in Bihar between the Two World Wars.

Volume II gives us the glimpse of new awakening which covers twelve chapters. The theme has a comprehensive survey of city and its people, trade, craft and profession, local bodies, voters and their rights, education and economy, repressive policy of the government, reaction of the people and the Quit India Movement.

Volume III has surveyed the J.P. Movement in ten chapters. It depicts his early career, political ideology, the

struggle of workers, Wahabi Movement and Bihar, Birsa Movement and political awakening.

Volume IV gives us a glimpse of prominent leaders, particularly of Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Jagjivan Ram — their participation in the freedom struggle, suffering in jails and as leaders of the masses in Bihar.

We have collected the material from several institutions, viz. Delhi University Library, Sapru House Library, Indian Council of Historical Research Library, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Jawaharlal Nehru University Library, Jamia Millia Islamia Library, Sahitya Akademi Library and Central Secretariat Library. We feel beholden to the members of these academic institutions for their support to us during our researches. We have used the material from the writings of eminent authors to fill up gaps in some chapters. We are grateful to them.

These volumes would be useful for social scientists, teachers, students and researchers in India and abroad.

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Bihar: The Land and The People

One of the difficulties in the way of studying Bihar and the Biharis, especially if we have to confine our observations within narrow limits, lies in the subtle differences of life, habits, customs and, to a certain extent, of dialects, which subsist between the inhabitants of one part of the state and those of another. There are, of course, certain broad national characteristics common to the whole state and its people, and they tend to develop both in number and in importance every year. It is no longer true that Bihar is, as Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha once complained, nothing but a *terra incognita*. In fact, it has secured for itself "a distinct and honourable status as an administrative unit, with an individuality on the same footing as that of the more important provinces in the country".

If difficulties exist in the matters of manners and customs, they are multiplied a hundredfold in the sphere of daily life and domestic economy. Hence, in the latter case, it is almost impossible to make a statement which will be universally true of all Bihar. What is true of Mithila, for instance, is not necessarily true if applied to Chotanagpur or Magadh. We may go even further and remark that many things which are true of the people of North Bihar do not apply at all to the Santhal Parganas or to the Santhals. In no other state in India are the local differences so marked as in Bihar. The numerous foreigners who come to study its

ancient monuments and sites are generally struck by the variety of different styles and manners in architecture, painting and sculpture. There is, for instance, a Patna School of Painting, a Mithila School; and the same thing may be said as regards architecture. The Islamic monuments, based on arches, vaults and domes, are accurate and differ from the trabeated construction of Hindu edifices whose essential bases are beams and lintels. This great variety contributes in no small measure to the charm and fascination which the state exercises over everyone who happens to tour through it. As was very aptly said, in one of her inimitable essays, by the late Sister Nivedita:

> It has doubtless been this close contiguity of highly diversified elements within her boundaries that had so often made Bihar the birth place of towering geniuses. The great Chandragupta, his grandson Ashoka, the whole of the Gupta dynasty, Sher Shah, and finally Guru Govind Singh are more than a fair share of the eminent personalities of Indian history for one province to have produced. The policy of the great Akbar himself was determined by the ideas of his predecessor, Sher Shah. Each of the great Biharees has been an organizer. No one had been a blind force or a tool of others. Each had consciously surveyed and comprehended contemporary conditions, and knew how to unify them in himself, and give them a final, irresistible impulsion in true direction.

These words are no doubt as true of the present—comparing small things with great—as of the past.

It is, therefore, necessary when treating several features of Bihar life, to deal separately with the various parts of the state and to avoid general statements as far as possible.

Physical Geography

Lying approximately between 21° 58′ 10″ and 27° 31′ 15″ N latitudes and 83° 19′ 50″ and 88° 17′ 40″

E longitudes in the Lower and Middle Gangetic region and extending to 605 kilometres from north to south and 483 kilometres from west to east, this almost quadrilateral state embraces some of the most fertile lands in India. It has an area approximately of 1,74,083 square kilometres—5.30 per cent of the total area of the Indian Union—bounded on the north by the independent kingdom of Nepal, on the west by Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, on the south by Orissa and on the east by West Bengal. The river Ganga flows right across it from west to east dividing it into two unequal parts, the southern portion being almost double the northern portion. Thus the main line of physiographic division is between the great monotonous alluvial plain of the Ganga and her tributaries and the Chotanagpur plateau, also called the South Bihar Plateau, which is made up of several smaller plateaus and dissected hilly country interspersed with valleys. There is perhaps no absolute line of demarcation, but all the same, the Ganga plain is undoubtedly very different from the highlands of Chotanagpur in every way. Whereas in North Bihar, the plains are extensive and stretch up to the foothills of the Himalayas, in South Bihar they are narrower and the depth of alluvium is thinner until it abuts on the dissected foreland of the Chotanagpur plateau in the south and the Kaimur plateau, north of the river Son, in the west. The alluvial plain on both sides of the Ganga has been formed by the silt carried by this mighty river and its numerous tributaries. The Chotanagpur plateau, however, has some of the oldest rocks in the world.

Bihar is thus traditionally divided into three natural divisions, viz. (i) the North Ganga Plain, (ii) the South Ganga Plain, and (iii) the South Bihar (Chotanagpur) Plateau.

The North Ganga Plain

It extends from the base of the *terai* in the north to the Ganga in the south, covering an area of about 56,980 square kilometres of alluvial soil of great depth and extreme fineness. It spreads over the whole of the Tirhut, Saran, Darbhanga and Kosi divisions and has a gentle slope towards the south. The Ganga flows from west to east near the southern margin of the plain. It is joined just above Patna by the Gandak draining from Nepal and farther upstream on the opposite bank by the Son from the south-west. Farther west the Ghaghra (Gogra) joins the Ganga from the north-west and for some distance both rivers form the state boundary, the angle of land between them being part of Uttar Pradesh. Another important tributary joining the Ganga from Nepal much farther east is the Kosi.

Towards the north and north-west in the East and West Champaran districts the country begins to undulate and the alluvial plain gives place to a broken hilly region known as the Dun or Ramnagar Dun. This consists of a range of low hills, about 32 kilometres, north of which the Someshwar range extends for about 74 kilometres along the northern frontier. Below these hills extend southwards and eastwards large grassy prairies watered by numerous hill-streams, while in the background tower the Himalayas of Nepal in an imposing panorama of eternal snow. It is noticeable that the soil even at the foot of the hills has no rocky formation and wherever water can be impounded, rich growth of crop is possible. The hill-streams, however, play havoc by bringing down huge quantities of sand and destroying cultivable lands. The hills contain large stretches of jungles and forests. In the north the *terai* carries *sal* forests and tall reedy grasses; but most of the unreclaimed *terai* lies beyond the Nepal border, leaving Bihar only a very thin strip east of the Kosi. Floodplains

and *diaras* have a riverine jungle *of sissu* tamarisk and reeds.

The South Ganga Plain

The alluvial filling south of the Ganga is shallow, a mere veneer and the peninsular edge is very ragged. Many groups of small craggy hills rise up to 488 metres from islands of bare rock or scrub. In the west, where the Son makes a great deltaic reentrance into the older rocks, this alluvial strip is some 137 kilometres wide, but in the east where lie the Rajmahal Hills, the extreme north-east point of the peninsula, it goes almost directly on to the Ganga. A considerable part of this sprawling plain is but *bhangar,* and the inundated areas are fewer than those to the north of the Ganga in the Tirhut and Saran divisions. Still they are important. The river bank itself lies high, except in Bhojpur district, and at high water the tributaries are flooded and pushed back. The Punpun valley, parallel to the Son on the east, is thus annually flooded.

Both in the north and the south of the Ganga, the construction of railways across the drainage causes local, but sometimes disastrous waterlogging and flooding. Some of these temporary inundations, however, are agriculturally useful; either rabi crops are grown on them when they dry out, or they are bunded for producing dry-weather rice.

The Chotanagpur Plateau

The southern part of the state, an undulating tract of land full of hills and ridges and with many winding rivers, valleys and basins, is very different in character, coinciding with the main part of the Chotanagpur plateau and ranging from 300 metres to 900 metres above sea-level. This plateau forms a part of the great Gneissic-schistose plateau of peninsular India. In late Paleozoic times, it was

partly covered by lower Gondwana rocks, including coal-bearing strata, which due to subsequent faulting have been preserved in down-faulted basins. The main coalfields lie partly in West Bengal, partly in Bihar and notably along the Damodar Valley. The principal field Jharia-Asansol-Raniganj, shared by the two states, yields up to nine-tenths of India's coal. Interbedded lavas as well as dykes of igneous rock also occur and the western Chotanagpur plateau is characterised by a succession of flat topped hills, partly structural in origin and partly due to the development, of erosion platforms at different levels. The scenery of the eastern part of the plateau has been transformed both by the development of coal-mining and other industries and by the creation of a series of lake-reservoirs forming part of the Damodar valley Scheme.

To those who know it, Chotanagpur has a charm of its own. Right away in the south-west corner of Bihar, bordering Madhya Pradesh, it is totally distinct from the state to which it belongs. North Bihar is the land of plains; Chotanagpur is one long undulating sweep of hills throughout. Its centre is vast plateau, averaging something like 600 metres in height, and descending in its outlying' districts to the plains below, with ridges running out here and there beyond its borders into West Bengal, There are hills everywhere, grouped into range after range or rising abruptly 300 metres or more out of the surrounding level, thrown up like watch-towers over the land. Many of them present: a curious and fantastic formation: rocks lying piled upon one another in apparently endless confusion or towering on the summits of hills, precipitous and inaccessible, forming weird and irregular silhouettes. All are covered more or less with thick tree jungles, showing bare patches of black rock beneath, while on the lower and more undulating slopes grow vast tree forests that stretch over the land for miles around.

The entire area forms one of the most charming series of views imaginable. The far-off hills in the background, in exquisite tints of blue or purple as the light falls, the nearer hills picturesquely shaped and luxuriant in every shade of green with their bold escarpments in black or grey, and the brown plains below furnishing their quota of colour in the tender green of early rice, the brilliant yellow of the *sirguja* or the gold of the fields at harvest, present a panorama of perfect charm and beauty.

One of its chief attractions is its almost endless variety. Here hill tract of jungle, wild as if never trodden on by man, presents a striking contrast to a well-tended stretch of cultivation where the rich red soil bears evidence of the tender care of many generations. Far away from the stir of life, in the absolute seclusions of the Tundi jungle, it is hard to imagine that less than 33 kilometers away lies the Jharia coal-field with its ceaseless activity and many enterprises, while Peasant, the home of the gods, with its stream of pilgrims form the busiest cities of India and its multitude of glittering temples, furnishes a scarcely less striking contrast to the mud-built Santhal villages beneath its shadow, whose gods, invisible and indistinct, need no shelter but the sacred grove.

Rivers

One of the most striking features of the river system of Bihar is the dominant role of the Ganga. First impinging on the boundary of Bihar near its confluence with the Karmanasa, it is joined by the three great affluents—the Ghaghra, the Gandak, and the Son—not very far from Patna. Further east, the Punpun joins it from the south at Fatwah in Patna district, while the Harohar and the Kiul join it at Surajgarha in Munger. The important rivers that join the Ganga from the north are, from west to east, the Ghaghra, the Gandak, the Burhi Gandak, the Kosi, the

Mahananda and their tributaries. Of these, the Ghaghra is liable to overflow its channel and inundate the adjoining region during the rainy season. The Gandak, a snow-fed river formed by the union of seven Himalayan streams, enters Bihar near Tribeni and joins the Ganga opposite Patna. A little to the north-west of its confluence with the Ganga and along its bank is situated Sonpur, famous for a great bathing festival which is the occasion for the greatest cattle and elephant fair in the world. Though not a snow-fed stream, the Burhi Gandak has a considerable flow of water throughout the year. The old beds forsaken by it can be traced along the adjacent country. The Baghmati, rising in Nepal, north of Kathmandu, follows a course nearly parallel to that of the Burhi Gandak which joins it near Rosera in Samastipur. The Kosi leaves its mountain home at Chatra and arrives in Bihar as a mighty river heavily laden with sandy debris. When swollen with heavy rains and melting snow, it rushes impetuously down, turning fertile fields into arid wastes of sand, sweeping away factories, farms, and villages; and changing the whole face of the country from a fruitful landscape into a wilderness of sand and swamp. The Mahananda, an important easterly tributary of the Ganga in Bihar, actually joins the Ganga in West Bengal.

The Karmanasa, the Son, the Punpun, the Phalgu, the Sakri and the Kiul are the principal streams that join the Ganga from the south. Of these the Son, the Erannoboas of Megasthenes, is the mainstay of some very important irrigation works in the state. The other rivers are also extensively utilized for irrigation through a complicated and ingenious network of what is called *pynes* and *ahars* (long narrow canals and shallow catchment basins).

The principal rivers of Chotanagpur are the Damodar, the Suvarnarekha, the Barakar and the Koel. Rising from the district of Palamu, the Damodar flows eastward in a structural trough between the plateaus of Ranchi and

Hazaribagh. The Damodar Valley Corporation has executed a number of projects in the Damodar basin to control the water of this mighty river for irrigation and power generating purposes, and to prevent the enormous destruction its floods used to cause both in Bihar and in West Bengal. The Corporation's main dams at Tilaiya, Konar, Maithon and Panchet are all located in Bihar, as also the thermal power stations at Bokaro and Patratu.

Originating in the Ranchi plateau near the junction of the Ranchi and Hazaribagh districts, the Suvarnarekha flows through the district of Singhbhum and at Hundrughagh forms one of the most picturesque falls in the state. It flows in a south-easterly direction and near its entry into Dhalbhum is joined by the Kharkai from the right. Just south-east of their confluence is situated the famous steel city of Jamshedpur. The Barakar rises from the district of Hazaribagh and flowing through the district of Dhanbad falls into the Damodar. The North Koel emanates from the western part of the Ranchi district and falls into the Son after flowing through the middle of the district of Palamu. The South Koel, on the other hand, flows through the Singhbhum district and joins the Sankh. None of these rivers contains more than a few inches of water during the dry season; but in the rains they come down in sudden and violent freshes, which for a few hours, or it may be even days, render them almost impassable.

Waterfalls and Hot Springs

The districts noted for their waterfalls are Ranchi, Singhbhum, Hazaribagh, Palamu, Rohtas, Gaya and Santhai Parganas. Those in Ranchi would in a Western country be regarded as worthy of a visit even from a distance. Of these the finest are the Hundru falls on the Suvarnarekha on the scarped edge of the Ranchi plateau. During the rains when the river is in spate, a large body of red water "thunders over the cliff in a cloud of spray". The

Dasam falls, near Bundu and humbler than the Hundru, are on the Kanchi river with a precipitous drop of 40 metres on a rock island and a subsidiary drop of 15 metres further down. The Sadni falls on the Sankh in western Ranchi are a picturesque waterfall about 61 metres high. Another waterfall, the Jonha, is about 35 kilometres east of Ranchi town.

The Garha Nadi, a tributary of the Suvarnarekha, has a fall 15 metres high about 7 kilometres north of the Dhirol P.W.D. bungalow on the Chaibasa-Moholia road in Singhbhum. The Hirni Falls on the Ranchi-Chaibasa road is yet another picturesque waterfall in Singhbhum. The Motijhara, with a fall of 46 metres high, is in the Santhal Parganas on a small tributary of the Ganga. The Kakolat falls, about 17 kilometres south of Nawada, are on a hill torrent which tumbles down a long series of rapids through dense woods till it abruptly drops over a precipice 24 metres high. The Gutamghagh falls, about 10 kilometres south-east of Mahuadanr, are in Palamu on a small stream which decends down a ledge 36 metres high, while the Burhaghagh falls (142 metres) on the Burha river are said to be the highest waterfall located west of Mahuadanr. The Ghaghri falls in the same district, about 7 kilometres north of Netarhat, have a drop of 43 metres.

The Rajrappa waterfall, about 25 kilometres east of Ramgarh, is another waterfall remarkable for its scenic beauty.

One of the finest waterfalls, however, is on the Karmanasa river which has a descent of 90 metres near Chhanpathar village in Rohtas. The Durgaoti river falls 90 metres into the deep glen of Khadar Khoh, making a picturesque waterfall. Another river, the Phylwaria, drops 137-152 metres into what are called the Zibhar Khund falls. The Kao Nadi, about 3 kilometres above the Tarachandi pass, tumbles over a precipice about 36 metres high.

There is a group of seven hot springs at the foot of the Vaibhara hill in Rajgir. These springs of hot water, never actually boiling cauldron-like, have been mentioned in the sermons of the Buddha; their warm, mineral water has a high curative value and is also radioactive. The place is visited by thousands of tourists and pilgrims, particularly in the winter season.

The quartzitic Kharagpur Hills in Munger are no less important than Rajgir in this respect; for they, too, contain several thermal springs, situated near Kachu, at Sringirikh, Bhimbandh, Rishikund, Bhaduria Hill, Sitakund and, close to the place last named, at Barde and Bainsa Hill. They are said to be due to deep-seated thermodynamic action, and it is interesting to find historic tenstimony to the former existence in this region of an active volcano. The Sitakund spring is situated in the village. It is about 7 kilometres east of Munger town. another hot-water spring is the Rameshwarakund which rises at the foot of a hill near the panchkumari waterfall. Rishikund is a hot spring situated about 10 kilometres south of Sitakund at the head of a Picturesque little valley between the two ridges of the Kharagpur Hills. The Bhimbandh hot spring is, of course, the finest and hottest in Munger with a temperature of 60°C and air bubbles. Lachhmankund, about 13 kilometres south-west of Kharagpur, has a temperature of 62°C.

There are about seven hot springs in the Santhal Paraganas and five In Hazaribagh. The Surajkund hot spring, 2 kilometres east of Barahatha on the Grand Trunk Road, is the hottest of them all with a temperature of 87°C. The temperature of the other four ranges for 33°C to 82°C. Being sulphurous, they are held in considerable repute by the people in the neighborhood as potent remedies, especially for itch, ulcers and other skin diseases.

In the coalfield regions of Dhanbad district there are three thermal springs. The Tentulia hot spring, situated on

the right bank of Damodar some 5 kilometres south-west of the channel, has a temperature of 87°C. The Tataha hot spring in Palamu lies within the Hutar coalfied.

Climate

The cold weather commences early in November and comes to an end in the middle of March. The hot weather then sets in and lasts till about the middle of June. Soon after this, the rainy season commences and continues till the end of September; but as the beginning of this season occurs when a storm from the Bay of Bengal passes over Bihar, the commencement of the monsoon may be as early as the last week of May or as late as the first or second week of July. The climate in the cold weather is pleasant. The days are bright and warm, and the sun is not too hot. As soon as it sets, the temperature falls, and the heat of the day yields place to a sharp bracing cold. The mean temperature in November all over Bihar varies from 19.6°C in Ranchi to 22.2° C in Jamshedpur. It is only over the plateaus that the average temperature is about 20°C, although the mean minimum temperature is about 14°C. While the mean temperature in Gaya and Patna in December is 17°C and 18.2°C respectively, it is 17°C in the same month at Ranchi and Hazaribagh. January is the coldest and cruellest month in Bihar. The mean minimum temperature in January varies from 7.5°C to 10.5°C, though some places like Netarhat record much lower temperatures than 7.5°C. In the Chotanagpur plateau, however, December is the coldest month. Both the Gangetic region and Chotanagpur fall along the paths of rain-laden winds arriving in this season all the way from the Mediterranean Sea. These shallow, extensive, temperate cyclones bring clouds and rains in January and February and are immensely important for the *rabi* crops of the plains.

The mean temperature in March, when the hot season sets in, varies between 23.2°C (Motihari) and 26.5° C (Jamshedpur), while their mean minimum is 14.5°C and their mean maximum 34° C. In the months of April, May and June, the heat in the northern plains is intense during the day but less so in the highland regions of Chotanagpur. The highest temperature is often registered in May which is the hottest month in the State. The average temperature of Ranchi in May is 30.5° C, while its mean maximum and minimum temperatures are 36.5°C and 23.7°C respectively. The average temperature in May is more than 32°C throughout the state except in the northern end of the State and the elevated parts of Chotanagpur. Like the rest of northern India, Bihar, too, experiences dust-storms, thunder-storms and dust-raising winds during the hot season. Dust-storms, having a velocity of 48-64 kilometres per hour, are most frequent in May with a second maximum in April and June. The hot winds (*loo*) of the Bihar plains blow during April and May with an average velocity of 8-16 kilometres per hour, greatly affecting human comfort during this season. The month of June, although hot, records lower temperature on account of the rains associated with the onset of the monsoon which is followed by a period of continuous rainfall from June to September, or, to be precise, from mid-June to mid-September. A distinct change in the weather takes place with the commencement of the monsoon generally caused by the first cyclonic storm which originates in the Bay of Bengal.

Although the rainy season begins in June, the rainiest months are July and August. The rains are the gift of the south-west Monsoon, one of the branches of which reaches its goal in the west where it finds an area of low pressure. The Himalayas in the north and the foreland of peninsular India constrict its passage, causing heavy rainfall in

eastern and northern Bihar. The rain decreases in general from east to west according to the intensity and the number of cyclones visiting the transitional belt of Bihar lying between wet West Bengal and dry Uttar Pradesh. The highlands of Chotanagpur stand on a different footing altogether. The Pats with an elevation of over 900 metres and the Ranchi-Hazaribagh plateaus with an elevation of over 600 metres record a higher rainfall than any other part. The Damodar and the Suvarnarekha basins form natural corridors for the march of the saturated Bay current which causes heavy rainfall in their topographically favoured areas. The western part of Chotanagpur receives heavy rains in the segment of the highlands owing to its higher altitude. There are in Bihar three distinct areas where rainfall exceeds 1800 mm. Two of them lie on the northern and north-western wings of the State and the third lies in the Netarhat Pat. The Chotanagpur highlands should have a better supply of rain than the adjoining northern and north-western plain because of several reasons. They are nearer the source of monsoon depressions, i.e. the Bay and the delta. They are benefited by this supply both from the Bay and the Arabian Sea branches. Since they have a higher elevation, the winds crossing the plateau have to ascend a height of 300-900 metres, which causes cooling, cloud-formation and rainfall. The highest rainfall in the plains is in Kishanganj subdivision.

The south-west Monsoon normally withdraws from Bihar in the first week of October. The north-westerly winds then begin to draw in over the plains from the feeble high in north-west India towards the depression that develops over the Bay of Bengal. An important feature of the retreating monsoon season in Bihar is the invasion of tropical cyclones originating in the Bay of Bengal at about 12° N latitude. Bihar is also influenced by the typhoons originating in the South China Sea. The maximum

frequency of the tropical cyclones in Bihar is during September-November, especially during the asterism called *hathiya* (September 26 to October 7). These cyclones, so essential for the maturing of paddy, are required also for the moistening of the soil for the cultivation of *rabi crops.*

Flora

In 1981 Bihar had 16.85 per cent of its total area clothed with forests and woodlands.[1] One can still see the last remnants of the dense extensive *sal* forests occupying the whole of the middle Ganga plain in Gorakhpur (U.P.) and north Saharsa and Purnia districts (Bihar). The present natural vegetation of the Bihar plains, outside the cultivated areas, is of a savannah or parkland type, characterised mostly by extensive meadows and grass-lands punctuated by trees with little or no human interference at all. The parkland effect is felt especially where the cultivated vegetation of farm crops, orchards and groves of trees or clumps of bamboos are abundant.

The hilly regions of Bihar are full of tropical forests. The sub-Himalayan foothill belt of forest along the northern border of Champaran district is embroidered with natural *sal (Shorea robusta), sissu (Dalbergia sissoo),* and *tun (Cedrela toona);* the *cottontree (Bombax malabaricum), kusum (Schleichera trijuga)* and *khair (Acacia catechu)* are also common. Bamboos thrive in the moist *terai* tract; *satbai* grass and the *narkat* reed are also valuable products, and extensive thickets of tamarisk line the Gandak river. The sluggish streams and lakes are covered with water-weeds, the sides being often fringed by reedy grasses, bulrushes, and tamarisk. Near villages, small shrubberies are found rich in *mango, sissu, jamun (Engenia jambolana),* various species of *Ficus* and occasional tamarind, and a few other semi-spontaneous and more or less useful species.

A considerable part of the Chotanagpur highlands and Santhal Parganas is occupied by forests and woodlands. These range from stunted open growth on naked, soilless slopes or southern driver slopes facing the sun to fairly good-sized dense forests in more favourable situations. Some rocks, such as phyllites, are clothed with bamboos. *Sals,* which seem to have a preference for some rocks, grow best in east and west Singhbhum districts. Although the natural vegetation of Chotanagpur and the rest of Bihar is largely deciduous characterised by the shedding of leaves in early summer, there are nevertheless several evergreen trees also among all the vegetation types of the state. The *sal,* for instance, grows side by side with an undergrowth which is mostly evergreen along with the ever-green mango *trees, jamun, piar,* jack fruit, etc.

Sal is the most important tree of the Chotanagpur forest. Being deciduous, it gives, largely on account of its predominance, a leafless look to the forests in early summer. It occurs along with a number of other species, the most important of which are *mahua (Bassia latifolia), jamun, kusum, tilai (Wendlandia), harin harra (Armossa rohitulea), gular (Ficus glomerata), asan (Terminalia tomentosa),* etc. The Singhbhum forests are the best in the Kolhan area in the south-west of the district, though about half of the district round the cultivated Chaibasa plain is wooded. The narrower valleys in Ranchi district are often terraced for rice cultivation, and the rice-fields and their margins abound in marshes and water plants. The surface of the plateau land between the valleys, where level, it is often bare and rocky; where undulating, it is generally clothed with a dense scrub jungle. The steep slopes of *the ghats* are covered with a dense forest mixed with climbers. In Hazaribagh and Palamu the forest become slightly poorer than in the south with a gradual decrease of rainfall, and such trees as *shisham* begin gradually to

appear. In south Gaya, south Munger and south Bhagalpur the forest is generally replaced by scrub in which *sal* is relatively scarce, while *palas, asan, semal, harra, gular, ber (Zizyphus mauritania), shisham, babul, siris (Albizzia lebbek),* and bamboo increase in number. In north Bihar the predominant feature of the vegetation is apparently the frequency of groves and orchards, mainly of deciduous trees interspersed with a large variety of evergreen species.

The scheme of associating Gram Panchayats with the management of Bihar's forests originated in 1958. Forest coupes are settled with forest cooperative societies, while forest depots are run on a no-profit no-loss basis. For better exploitation of these forests in accessible areas, construction of forest roads has been given priority. Research on the various forest problems is conducted by the Forest Research Provision, Bihar. Apart from the permanent research plots maintained from year to year to collect information regarding various forest problems, several new experimental and other research plots are laid out every year to confirm the results obtained from the previous ones. A large majority of these new experimental plots relate to finding out the techniques for a large-scale afforestation programme. Field experimentation ranges from various forest species like *teak, shisham, bamboo, eucalyptus,* etc. to techniques of soil working, different doses and combinations of fertilizers. Since lac is a good earner of foreign exchange, efforts have been made by the Government to give a fillip to its production and to raise the number of lac farms. The renovation work of *sabai baries* of Shahebganj has proved to be of great material benefit to the Pahariya Adibasis. In fact, the various developmental activities of the Forest Department provide ample opportunity to the poor tribal people residing in and around the forest areas to earn their livelihood.

Fauna

The jungles of Bihar abound in wildlife, though some of the notable game animals and birds like tiger, deer, buffalo, duck, pheasant, etc., are fast disappearing. In order to prevent the extinction of any species and to preserve them and maintain their balance with nature, seventeen wildlife sanctuaries and two national parks covering not less than 2,979 square kilometres of forest land have been set up. Fourteen of these sanctuaries and two national parks are located in Chotanagpur alone, while the remaining game sanctuaries are in the northern fringe of west Champaran district. As a result of strict management and proper protection given to wildlife, the present for once has become much richer than the past and the difficult task of wildlife resuscitation and conservation has been greatly achieved, so that some of the rare animals on the verge of extinction, such as elephant, *gaur,* etc., have considerably multiplied. The Palamu National Park at Betla, a fine sanctuary and recreation area, has been chosen under 'Project Tiger, to protect and save tigers who were fast disappearing. The remaining forests of the state have been divided into 227 shooting blocks where shooting is permitted strictly in accordance with the provisions of shooting rules.

National Parks

The Hazaribagh National Park and the Palamu National Park are easily approachable by road. The best period for a visit is any day from October to June, just after the rainy season. The Hazaribagh National Park lies only 16 kilometres from Barhee and 19 kilometres from Hazaribagh and has a network of motorable roads, tourist lodges and forest rest-houses. Animals found in it are tigers, leopards, bear, *sambar,* spotted deer, pigs, etc. The Palamu National Park has been described by many eminent naturalists as one of the finest parks in north-

eastern India for observing a variety of wildlife from close range. Though the area of the park is 249.16 square kilometres, a short 16 kilometre drive early in the morning or late in the afternoon within 19 square kilometres near Betla is likely to bring into view almost all the animals which the plain and lower hill forests of north-eastern India can boast of. The park occupies the western parts of the Chotanagpur plateau and was constituted in the year 1960 as an extension of the Hazaribagh National Park. Palamu had been famous as a game reserve from time immemorial, and the Baresand Game Sanctuary in the district is one of the oldest sanctuaries in the state. In pre-independence days the governors used to have their annual shooting camp in this district. Betla, by which name the park is locally known, was the seat of the Chero kingdom during the medieval period. The forts, old and new, provide ample interest to the historian and the archaeologist. The ramparts of these two forts, rising from the bank of the river Oranga amidst some very fine forests, provide a picturesque setting for the park which is skirted by the Koel river on the south and west and the Oranga on the east. *Chital* and *gaur* are the commonest animals in the park. Important among others found in fairly large numbers are *sambar, nilgai,* pig and the sloth bear. The carnivora of the park comprise tiger and leopard, while such lesser mammals as porcupines, hares, jungle cats, jackals, the small Indian civet, the palm-civet and the mongoose are common. Hyena, wolf and wild dog were formerly common, but they are now only occasionally seen. Mouse-deer, *chinkara* (Indian gazelle), four-horned antelope and the ant-eater pangolin have also been sighted. The rhesus monkey and the common *langur* provide attraction to children visiting the park. Elephants cross into the park some time in September and move out into its interior during March-April when sufficient water is not available for them in the park. The game birds there consist of black ibis, jungle fowl, swamp grey and black

partridge, quail, the white-necked stork, the pied hornbill, wagtails (migrant), the *harial* (green pigeon), doves, drongo, the crested serpent-eagle, forest owls, the *papiha* and other birds usually found in dry deciduous forests. The famous Kamaldah lake attracts several varieties of water birds including the common whistling and cotton teal, the comb duck, snipe and geese.

Besides these two notable National Parks, the Sasangda Wildlife Sanctuary located near Barajamda in Singhbhum district is famous for its herds *of gaur* and elephants. The Baresand Sanctuary, 48 kilometres from Daltonganj in Palamu district is famous for spotted deer, *sambar,* tiger, *gaur* and elephants. The Kodarma Wildlife Sanctuary on the Patna-Ranchi road provides opportunity for watching tigers, bears and different varieties of deer. The Bamiabaru Sanctuary in the Kolhan forest division of Singhbhum district is famous for its excellent surroundings. The Madanpur Sanctuary situated in the north-west corner of Champaran district is approachable by a metalled road from Bettiah and from Bagha station on the N.E. Railway. The animals to be seen here are tigers, *sambars,* leopards, spotted and barking deer, pigs and a fairly large variety of ground and water birds. Keeping in mind the growing interest of the people in wildlife, the Government of Bihar has laid out a zoological garden at Patna.

Patna

Patna, the capital city of Bihar, epitomises the history and culture of this region. From the days of Ajatashatru, who founded the city of Pataliputra twenty-five centuries ago, to the days of Azim-ush-shan, the grandson of Aurangzeb, who governed Bihar in the early years of the eighteenth century and renamed Patna as Azimabad, the city passed through various phases of its glorious existence. It is known to history as the seat of the mighty Magadhan

Empire and the capital of the great Nandas, Mauryas, Sungas and Guptas. Few cities in India can, therefore, claim such a chequered and continuous history of nearly 2500 years as that of Patna. The modern city of Patna occupies a narrow strip of level plain along the south of the river Ganga over a length of nearly 16 kilometres, the width varying between 1.6 kilometres and 4 kilometres against the river front. Curiously enough, these dimensions of the modern city of Patna closely approximate those of the ancient Pataliputra. The relics of the ancient city are found at Kumhrar, Bhikhnapahari, Agamkuan, Bulandibagh, Kankarbagh and at other neighbouring places. Kumhrar is the site of the ancient Magadhan place only recently unearthed through archaeological excavations. The remains of the wooden rampart and the hundred-pillared halls of the Mauryan capital succeed in kindling the memories of the wonder that was Bihar.

Should we in modern Patna start from the Raj Bhawan and pass through the wide avenues spread around the new capital, forming a semi-circular segment in the foreground, we would find in the same sector the old and new Secretariat buildings, the Bihar Assembly and Council House and the Martyrs' Memorial constructed in front of the Old Secretariat compound to perpetuate the hallowed memories of the brave who sacrificed their lives in the historic struggle for independence. Proceeding we go on to the High Court located in a palatial building with a marble staircase and on to Golghar, a huge beehive-shaped structure, 30 metres high with walls 4 metres thick at the bottom built by Capt. John Garstin in 1786, which is still used as a state granary. It is noted for its peculiar shape and powerful echo. From the top of it one gets a splendid panoramic view of the entire city. And on the way is the Patna Museum, which houses a rare collection of terracotta figurines gathered in the course of excavations from the site of the ancient Pataliputra. Other places of tourist interest in the city are the Khuda Bux Oriental Public

Library, the Patna College, with its ancient Dutch buildings, the Quilla House, a fort built by Sher Shah, and Sri Harimandirji, the Sikh Gurudwara, built by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, around the room in which Guru Gobind Singh, the last and most renowned of the Sikh gurus, was born. It is second of the four great thrones in the Sikh world, the first being Sri Akal Takht, Amritsar, in the Punjab.

Rajgir

Rajgir has been one of the most important health resorts of the State and also an important place of pilgrimage for Jains and Buddhists. As Rajgriha, it was the first capital of Magadha; as a place of historical and archaeological interest, it abounds today in valuable remains of forts and monuments. Surrounded by tree clad hills and beautiful scenes that are both bracing and evocative of ancient memories, it contains a number of hot springs, the water of which is said to contain some valuable mineral properties. It was here that the Buddha first studied under Alara and Uddaka and spent his time in retreat after the attainment of Nirvana. Naturally, when the Buddha died, his disciples chose to hold the first great Buddhist Council at Rajgir. It was in the Sattparini cave that the Council was held and the tenets of the Buddhist faith were drawn up and finalised.

Nalanda, the site of the ancient University of Nalanda, is only about 10 kilometres from Rajgir. The remains of the old University have been excavated and kept here. The famous site of the University of Odantapuri was at Bihar Sharif whose history dates back to the medieval period when it became the capital of Bihar. A religious fair is held here at the *durgah* of a Muslim divine, Shah Sharfuddin.

There are remains of some ancient Buddhist buildings on the Pir-pahari Hills near Bihar Sharif, while Pawapuri or

Apapuri, the 'pure and sinless', a place of pilgrimage for Jains, is a tiny village in Nalanda district. It is famous for its Jain shrine in the middle of a lake, a shrine of dazzling white marble. Lord Mahavira, the last 'ford-maker' or Tirthankara of the Jains, is said to have attained *kaivalya* here.

Gaya

Ninety-two kilometres southwest of Patna, Gaya is an important railway junction and, like Banaras, one of the most important places of pilgrimage for the Hindus, most of whom offer *pindas* or funeral cakes here. The Vishnupada, a temple built over the footprint of Vishnu on the solid rock that crops up on the west bank of the Phalgu river and round which the old town of Gaya proper was built, may be regarded as the centre of this pilgrimage, and is the largest and most important temple in Gaya.

Bodh Gaya

This sacred place, 13 kilometres due south of Gaya, is situated in sylvan solitude, far away from the madding din and bustle of town-life, on the banks of the Niranjana or Lilajan river (which joins the Mohane river, about 4 kilometres north of Bodh Gaya, and the united stream is called the Phalgu river), flowing 150 meters to its west, silhouetted against the Ganja-Bhindas Jethian range of hills. The most outstanding monument at Bodh Gaya is the Mahabodhi Temple, supposed to be oldest of its kind. Four towers on its four corners rise gracefully, giving the holy structure a poise and balance. Rows of *peepal* trees around the temple, which seem to have sprung up from the modern off-shoots of the sacred Bodhi Tree, provide an artistic frame of foliage to the picture that the high temple presents. The holy edifice is "like a banner unfurled by time to proclaim to the world the mighty efforts of Siddhartha to solve a universal problem, the problem of transcending sorrow and of preserving peace".

To the west of the temple stands the holy *peepal* tree, which is possibly the oldest historical tree in the world. Besides the holy tree, there are also other sites of meditation in the precinct of the temple, such as Vajrasana (or the ancient adamantine throne of the Buddha), Animeshalochana Stupa, Chankramana and Ratnagar Chaitya. Among modern monuments and institutions or tourist interest at Bodh Gaya, mention may be made of the Chinese Temple and Monastery built in 1945 to the west of the Mahabodhi Temple, the Tibetan Mahayan Monastery built in 1938, the Burmese Monastery, the Thai Monastery, the Archaeological Museum, and the Samanvaya Ashram which serves as the headquarters of the Bhoodan workers of the state.

Ranchi

The town of Ranchi, which is about 93 kilometres south of Hazaribagh, is an ideal health resort noted for its scenic attraction. It is picturesquely situated in the heart of the Chotanagpur plateau, at an altitude of 666 metres above sea level, and offers such places of tourist interest in and around itself as the Ranchi Lake, the Ranchi Hill, the Morhabadi Hill, the Hundru falls, the Jonha falls and the Hirni falls. Ranchi is also the headquarters of the Hindustan Steel Corporation and the seat of the Heavy Engineering Corporation.

Hazaribagh

Hazaribagh town, the headquarters of the North Chotanagpur division, is ideally situated on the high central plateau of the district, at an elevation of 609 metres above sea level, in the midst of a group of conical hills. There are three lakes in the vicinity of the town. Other places of interest in the district are the 'Bokaro Thermal Power Station, the Konar Dam, the Tilayia Dam—all built under the multipurpose project of the Damodar Valley

Corporation, and, finally, the Parasnath Hill, which takes its name from the twenty-third Jain Tirthankara, Parswanath, who is said to have attained Nirvana on this hill. A national park, about 19 kilometres from Hazaribagh, has been laid out on the two sides of the highway, connecting it with the Grand Trunk Road near Barhi.

Jamshedpur

Jamshedpur is famous in the country as a steel city where stands India's giant iron and steel plant established in 1907 by Sir Jamsedjee Nusserwanjee Tata. What was once the insignificant village of Sakchi has now grown into a great industrial city, a fine example of town planning. Tatanagar, named after its illustrious founder, 249 kilometres west of Calcutta, is the railway station for Jamshedpur on the Bombay-Calcutta main line of the South Eastern Railway. The Jubilee Park and the Dimna Lake are places of considerable interest here, particularly the latter which is one of the beauty spots of the State. At Jamshedpur is located the National Metallurgical Laboratory which is one of the first eleven national research laboratories of the Government of India. The Tata Memorial Park with its multi-coloured lighting devices and a number of fountains is an extremely charming place for an afternoon's outing.

Other Places of Interest

Bokaro Steel City situated in the district of Dhanbad and close to Berma Coal Fields, has a huge steel plant belonging to the Steel Authority of India. It has a planned township and a satellite industrial area around the same. Another important industrial centre is Begusarai, where an oil refinery of the Indian Oil Corporation, a factory of the Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation and a Thermal Power Station of the Bihar State Electricity Board are situated. Hajipur on the northern side of the Ganga near Patna has

a growing industrial estate, where a number of industrial units are coming up.

Dhanbad (161 kilometres north of Jamshedpur) is an important industrial centre of the state, in and around which are situated the Indian School of Mines, the Mining Research Station, the National Fuel Research Institute, and the Sindri Fertilizer Factory, the biggest of its kind in Asia. Palamu, another picturesque district in Chotanagpur, abounds in hills and hillocks and is made all the more notable by its numerous waterfalls and hot springs. The Palamu National Park is one of the finest parks in north-eastern India for observing a variety of wildlife from close range. Betla, by which name the park is locally known, was the seat of the Chero kingdom during medieval times. The old and new forts provide ample interest for the historian and the archaeologist. Sasaram, in the district of Rohtas, is a small township on the Grand Trunk Road, well known for its ancient monuments, especially for an inscription of Ashoka in a cave on the hill of Chandan Pir to the east of the town and for the imposing mausoleum of Sher Shah. Deoghar ('the home of gods') is a popular health resort and an important centre of Hindu pilgrimage, having an ancient temple of Lord Vaidyanath (1956) and a tank known as Shiva Ganga or Manasarovar. The Barari Caves, the rock-cut temple at Kahalgaon, the islet of Jahangir near Sultanganj and the Mandar Hill are among some of the important places in and around the Bhagalpur town. Vaishali, 37 kilometres south-east of Muzaffarpur town, is sacred to the Jains, for it was here that Lord Mahavira, their last Tirthankara, was born in 561 B.C. The place was also the seat of the celebrated ancient Republic of the Lichchhavis and is associated with the Buddha and Mahavira. The Buddha delivered many sermons in the monasteries of Vaishali and resided there for years. About a hundred years after his death, the Second General Council of the Buddhists was held here, which resulted in the codification of the Buddhist tenets into the Mahayan and Hinayan schools.

A historic stupa marks the route of Ashoka at Kesariya in the district of Champaran. At Lauriya Araraj and Lauriya Nandangarh there are two such pillars. Another pillar was erected at Rampurwa in the same district.

The People

Risley's theory of Aryan-Dravidian element found in various castes in Bihar does not now find favour with the anthropologists, for Aryan and Dravidian are linguistic terms and cannot, therefore, be used to designate races. There has been a good deal of mixture among the various castes. Many races came to India in successive waves and ultimately got absorbed and assimilated into the local population. Though the Brahmans and Kshatriyas belong to the same racial stock, the Kshatriyas are more mixed because of their marriage with various stocks of people. The so-called lower castes like the Koiri, Kurmi, Kahar, and Ahir represent a mixture of various racial strains. In their physical features they do not differ much from one another. Racially, the Doms and Chamars are even farther removed from the tribal groups.

Caste rivalries are numerous in Bihar, though modern life, better education, and, above all, the efforts of its enlightened youth, are gradually doing away with them. This same movement is suppressing the individual characteristics of the different castes, and will end by giving a more homogeneous tone to life in Bihar generally.

The Dominant Castes

The *dominant castes,* constituting 13.22 per cent of the total population of the State, are Brahman, Bhumihar, Rajput and Kayastha in most parts of the State, but other landowning castes are no less important in certain areas, for example, the Ahirs, Kurmis and Koiris in the plains of Bihar. Generally called 'backward', they were often tenants

of the Rajput and Brahman zamindars before the abolition of zamindari; they are far behind the Brahmans and Rajputs in education, and have only recently begun to show their potential importance in politics.

In the cities and towns, two important caste groups are the Kayasthas and Banias. The Kayasthas are prominent in all modern professional occupations and are generally given the status of elite castes. The Bhumihars are regarded as a caste different from the Brahmans who consider the former inferior in the social hierarchy. The Bhumihars, however, regard themselves as constituting a caste on par with the Brahmans, the adjectival part of their name being, for them, only functional and indicative of their being owners and cultivators of land. During the 1920s and 1930s, a movement, led by Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, was started by the leading Bhumihars who reasserted their right of reading the Vedas and performing religious rituals unaided by the Brahmans.

The Banias predominate in trade and commerce. Members of all these caste groups have occupied prominent positions in the educational and political life of the State.

The largest caste groups in the State are Ahirs (Yadavas), Telis, Brahmans, Rajputs, Koiris, Kurmis and Bhumihar Brahmans. These seven caste groups account for over 35 per cent of the total population of the State. According the census (1981), the proportion of the Scheduled Castes to the total population of Bihar is 14.51 per cent. The Scheduled Tribes account for 8.31 per cent of the total population of the State. The district of Ranchi has the highest proportion of Scheduled Tribes in its population (56.4 per cent). Other districts with Scheduled Tribes accounting for more than one-third of their population are Singhbum (44.1 per cent) and the Santhal Parganas (36.8 per cent). According to the last census reports, Palamu had the highest percentage of Scheduled Castes in its population followed by Gaya and Saharsa,

while Ranchi had the highest percentage of Scheduled Tribes followed by Singhbhum and the Santhal Parganas.

The Ahirs or Yadavas are an agricultural caste, whose hereditary occupation is cattle-raising. They tend flocks and herds, and though most are settled cultivators, some still roam about, selling milk and ghee. The Dhanuks are a servant class found in every place where there are high-caste Hindus. The poor among them still perform the menial household duties along with their wives and children. Some of the Dhanuks are also cultivators, while the females act as maidservants. The Musahars are field labourers, whose wages are paid in cash or in kind according to the traditional custom in the villages. Even today most of them live apart from the *basti,* and only a few have attained the dignity of cultivating on their own account or acquired occupancy rights. The Dusadhs are another caste probably of aboriginal descent. A fairly large number of them serve as watchmen or *chaukidars,* but they are also employed as village messengers, grooms, elephant drivers, grass and wood cutters, punkha-coolies and porters.

Although the Koiris are agriculturists pure and simple, they are distinguished from the Kurmis and other purely cultivating castes by their skill in growing vegetables and other special cash crops requiring more careful cultivation than the staple crops. In the neighborhood of large towns they work as market-gardeners. Many Koiris are rich landowners, and here and there members of the caste had formerly risen to be Zamindars. Some of them are still prosperous cultivators, holding occupancy rights.

The Scheduled Castes

According to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act, 1976, twenty-three castes have been identified as Scheduled Castes for special

constitutional privileges. The most notable among these castes are Bhumij, Chamar (Mochi), Dhobi, Dom, Dusadh, Musahar, Nat, and Pasi. Of the total population of Bihar, the Scheduled Castes constitute 14.5 per cent, their means of livelihood still being hard manual and menial labour. About 92 per cent of the total population of these caste are confined to the villages while those in the towns and cities, the slum-dwellers, work on the pavements. The Sulabh International, a voluntary organization, has done much to ameliorate the lot of the urban Harijans and to emancipate them from their age-old drudgeries. Although education is free for them, the vast majority of them still continue to wallow in illiteracy. Bihar is, however, proud of such Harijan leaders as Babu Jagjivan Ram, Bhola Paswan Shastri, Ram Sundar Das, and Ram Bilas Paswan, all of whom have made significant contributions to the public life of India in general and of Bihar in particular.

Caste and Politics in Bihar

Caste has played a significant role in the politics of Bihar ever since its creation in 1912, before which it was part of the greater Bengal. "However, as the base for political functions in intra-party conflict of the Congress Party", observes the Director of a Survey Research Unit, caste came to be widely recognized only after adult franchise became a living reality for the mass of the people."[3] Consequently, caste-consciousness, like politics itself, has now percolated to every important aspect of group life in the State, especially due to caste-based electoral politics and reservation in jobs.

> For a variety of reasons, mainly related to superior educational and economic resources, the political life of the State, until 1967, came to be dominated by various upper castes successively: the Kayasthas, the Bhumihar Brahmans (or Babhans), the Brahmans, and the Rajputs. The backward and the Scheduled Castes, whose numbers have grown in the political institutions in recent years, have also now begun to assert their position in State politics. Considering the

> constitutional safeguards for them and numerical logic of democratic politics, one may see their emergence as an important political force in the politics of the State, as the most significant fact of current history.[4]

The Yadavas, numerically the largest in the state, have begun to wield considerable political power.

The Upper Classes

Good society in Bihar is not really very exclusive. A rich man, whoever he is, may obtain access to the most select circles. In the smaller towns, the chief local magnates often invite the doctor, the lawyer, the teacher, and one or two other worthies. In some cases, it is the doctor or the lawyer who is so conscious of his superior intellectual and professional attainments that he feels he can ignore the local magnates without loss of dignity. Wealthy merchants and traders are generally treated as equals by the noblest in the State. Among some of the more old-fashioned people especially among the hitherto dominating castes, poor and uneducated landless labourers are riot received but as a rule no distinction is made on account of race or religion. Even those belonging to the so-called backward and tribal communities are honoured, and are recognised as leaders of society. Marriages between upper and lower castes, however, are exceptional.

Insane prejudice against the lower castes is gradually disappearing in Bihar. And so is the prejudice against the families of zamindars. The rich titled classes in the State are now regarded very much as ordinary mortals. In certain sections, however, there is a veneration for noble birth and high-sounding titles, although this trait is disappearing these days. There is rather a tendency among all classes in Bihar sometimes even among those who work the hardest, to look upon work as a painful necessity. The labourer who toils in the fields from dawn to dusk may cry out against the rich man who lives at ease and does nothing, but he feels that had he the means, he, too, would

have led an idle life. The young man of a good family who spends the day loitering about the main thoroughfares, thinking of nothing but clothes, clubs and the cinema, is an object of envy rather than contempt. In the country districts the influence of the zamindar families is considerable, but depends more on their position as landlords than as persons of title. In the small towns they have a certain importance on account of their historic descent. In the larger towns the members of the upper classes arefff of small account, unless accompanied by wealth.

The Middle Classes

In Bihar, the middle classes merge imperceptibly into the lower middle class, and then into the masses. The recruits to the professions come largely from the middle classes who almost, if not quite, monopolize the bar, the bench, the medical profession, trade and industry, the civil service and educational appointments. Many important posts in the Secretariat are held by men of humble birth. The public schools and technical institutions admit students strictly on the basis of merit and competitive examinations rather than on the basis of birth or class. But the middle classes in Bihar are mostly caste-ridden. The average lawyer, medical man, university professor or civil servant, however able he may be as a specialist in his own particular line, cannot keep himself uncontaminated by the communal virus and caste prejudices. This narrow-mindedness is one of the chief causes of the generally unsatisfactory state of Bihar politics.

The profession whose members stand highest for respectability and skill is medicine. Medical education in some of the colleges in the State is inadequate and unsatisfactory; yet, in spite of all such disadvantages, Bihari medical men are among the best in India. The life of a doctor in a country block is very hard and the salary

inadequate. But among this class are to be found men who have real ability, and their devotion to duty in the majority of cases is unquestionable and unflinching.

The typical businessman in Bihar is generally a Bania, a Marwari or a Punjabi. He is a shrewd, enterprising person educated in some cases in a commercial college but generally only in his father's shop, where he embarks upon his career as his father's assistant. He is now to be seen in all parts of Bihar, and manages to make money even in the least developed districts and in the poverty-stricken villages. He earns a far larger income than the majority of professional men, so that the middle classes, and to a certain extent the ex-zamindars, are beginning to see the advantages of putting their sons into business instead of making them into indifferent lawyers, doctors, or university teachers. Bihari businessmen are very practical nd utilitarian to a fault. The very nature of their work tends to enlarge their minds, and they are already influencing society in no small measure. Among them are to be reckoned the engineers and mechanics who are employed in all industrial undertakings. They, especially the civil and mechanical engineers, enjoy a deservedly high reputation, even outside the state.

Another important profession in Bihar, as elsewhere in India, both as regards numbers and influence, is the bar. The purely professional lawyers and advocates, who do not touch politics, are as a rule honest, hard-working, and respectable men, leading quiet, uneventful lives and are loyal to their clients.

There is, as we have noted, little distinction between the professional or upper middle class and the lower class; this in its turn lapses imperceptibly into the lowest strata of society—the peasant and the artisan. The pleader and the professor do not, as a rule, regard themselves socially as very much superior to the shopkeeper, but there is almost a fetishistic worship of the liberal professions, and it is the

ambition of the small tradesman, of the well-to-do farmer, of the skilled artisan, to make his son enter one of them.

The Position of Women

The position of women varies very greatly from one part of the State to another. The written laws may be uniform throughout the country, but nevertheless the customs of Chotanagpur and of Mithila are as different as those of Bengal and Maharashtra for example. In the unwritten laws of custom the position of women is very unequal. Whatever a daughter receives from her parents, when she marries becomes the property of her husband; at her death it goes to her children. Unmarried women may not go out alone, even if well over forty. A middle-aged spinster has an unhappy life. She is laughed at far more than she would be in advanced societies, and, save in some rare cases, she is seldom taken seriously. A few women of exceptional ability or remarkable character have succeeded in overcoming these disadvantages and acquiring considerable influence, but they are not many. However, girls are slowly beginning to obtain greater freedom. Some of them in cities may be seen cycling alone, and two girls may go out without an escort. But in the so-called lower classes the position of women is different. In the rural areas and among the so-called lower castes, husbands leave their wives at will and let them re-marry. There are many families in every village and city where 'purdah' is still observed, and one may know a man intimately for twenty years without ever having seen his wife and daughter.

Education of Women

With regard to education the law makes no difference between the sexes. Non-technical and technical schools and the universities are open to women, and a certain number avail themselves of these advantages. There are, of course, special colleges for girls, public and private, but those who

desire post-graduate training are encouraged to go to the co-educational colleges and universities. At the universities the proportion of male students is larger than that of the girls. Medicine, natural science and humanities are the faculties particularly favoured by women. The law faculty is not closed to them, nor does the bar council refuse to admit them to plead. There are several lady doctors, some of whom have a large practice; other women have achieved distinction in the field of literature, scholarship and politics. The education of the average woman, such as is given in the regular girls' schools today, consists of the three R's, the rudiments of civics, hygiene, domestic science (cookery, needlework, etc.), English and vernacular composition. Among a certain set of the upper classes it has been the fashion of late years to go in for higher education in a missionary school or convent. Physical exercise is as yet but little indulged in, and Bihari women are seldom athletes.

The great majority of Bihar women are as yet quite uneducated, the level of their literacy being 13.62 per cent. The contrast between men and women in this respect is remarkable; for 38.11 per cent of the male population is, according to the 1981 Census, literate.[5] The husband may be a man of learning and education, well-read, a man of the world, a favourite in society; but his wife is a mere housewife. She speaks no language but her own, never opens a book, save occasionally some mythological piece; she has no idea beyond her children, the kitchen and her husband. There is still among Biharis a certain amount of prejudice against highly educated women; it is, therefore, difficult sometimes to find a suitable boy to marry a highly educated girl.

On the other hand, there is one delightful type of woman of which Bihar has many examples. It is the rural woman, the peasant's wife who, with all her hard occupation, finds time to be an excellent mother, and brings

up her children far better than many a woman who devotes her whole life to them. She has little or no book-learning, and has rarely moved out of her own village. But she is shrewd and capable, and knows how to look after her own and her children's property. She was, perhaps, left a widow, with a few *kathas* of land, mortgaged up to the hilt, and is surrounded by greedy relatives and dishonest neighbours, who had taken every advantage of her late husband. She sets to work to introduce improvements, to clear off mortgages, and to educate her children. Everything which is done she does herself, and she rules her dependants and her family with an iron hand. If they are ill, she is kind to them and helps them in many ways. She even fixes the marriages of her young children, and settles all their affairs for them. Women of this sort are mostly to be found living in the country or in small towns; it is really astonishing how much they achieve, in spite of active hostility and passive resistance.

The Agricultural Population

Bihar, with more than 87.5 per cent of its total population in rural areas, is still mainly an agricultural State, and in spite of the great progress the industry has made within the last four decades, about 79.2 per cent of the total population is engaged in agricultural pursuits. Hence the absolute necessity that the peasant-class should be prosperous and contented. They form the backbone of the State and, perhaps, the best element of the population. The Bihari peasant is patient, kind-hearted, intelligent and by all means hard-working. He may be backward, ignorant, prejudiced and superstitious—and a fairly large number of these peasants are indeed superstitious—but in laboriousness and in the strength of his family affections he has few equals. Unfortunately, it is this class which had in the preindependence days been the most neglected and oppressed in many parts of Bihar; even today it is the last to feel the impact of generally improving conditions.

The agricultural system is of such a nature that the peasant-farmer does not have occupation for the whole year. Still, however, he knows the character and capabilities of every inch of his land. This piece of soil, he will tell you, is damp, that one is dry; one is exposed to the sun, and good for wheat, another is sunless, another is best suited for paddy, on another good sugarcane grows. One spot is suitable for *rabi* crops, but it is useless for hemp, that another is good for tobacco. Where irrigation is necessary, his fields are covered with a network of tube-wells and drainage canals; if his land is on the hillside, it is built up into a series of terraces. But all this toil is a labour of love to him. After the harvest he will watch his barn the whole night long after the day's work, to protect it from thieves.

In addition to the regular agricultural labours of the farms, there are other subsidiary occupations. On every farm a certain number of oxen are kept to plough the soil; but besides these there are also a few cows and buffaloes that yield milk for his children and for the market. Some of the poorer farmers and labourers keep pigs and poultry and sometimes tend sheep or rear silkworms. Some men and women make a little money by spinning, and by plaiting straw. Other small industries are also carried on in certain districts.

Uneconomic Holdings

Although agriculture has not been the sole source of wealth in Bihar, it is nevertheless the most important. This fact is perhaps one of the chief causes of the State's poverty, as no land can be rich which depends mainly on agriculture. Moreover, not only has the number of small holdings been increasing from year to year, the population, too, has increased rapidly. While there has been no significant land distribution, the problem of uneconomic holdings has been compounded by fragmentation, i.e., by the splitting and separation of the holdings of most

cultivators into many tiny plots, adding to the labour of the cultivators and decreasing the efficiency of their operations. The low yield of corn is also due to primitive methods and to the exhaustion of the soil through bad farming. Improved methods and machinery are being gradually introduced, but much passive resistance and many conservative prejudices have still to be overcome before the rural classes can be induced to take to them. Within recent years, however, some progress is noticeable, and it is now being realized that "the only practical solutions, in terms of both economic and political considerations, appear to lie, first, in increasing the productivity of the available land and, second, in creating non-agricultural sources of employment through the development of industries".[6] On the whole, agriculture is making slow but steady progress in every direction. Farming is more scientific, the use of chemical manure becoming more general, and the rotation of crops better understood. The obstacies which have to be combated are no doubt serious, but suitable remedies are being found. In the context of the predominantly rural character of the economy, national extension services have been developed to bring to the farmer the knowledge of better farming practices together with ready supply of the means. The credit for the establishment of such an extension agency goes to the Community Development Programme which was initiated during the First Five Year Plan period. From the point of view of economic development, Community Development Blocks provide opportunities for integrated rural development, and there is provision in the Block budget itself for (i) the improvement of agriculture, including provision for minor irrigation, soil conservation, improvement of village forests, animal husbandry and dairying; (ii) the development of co-operation; (iii) village industries; (iv) elementary education, especially provision of school buildings for local communities; and (v) rural water-supply and the programme of minimum rural

amenities, including construction of approach roads linking each village to the nearest road or railhead.

Sluggish and Depressed Peasantry

The Biharis are, as a rule, not big or muscular. They are wiry and capable of sustained labour; four men, for instance, will carry a heavy man in a palanquin —in itself no small weight—sixteen kilometres in three hours or even less. They are mostly assiduous and industrious cultivators, especially in southern Bihar, where they have devised an ingenious system of irrigation that taps and impounds all available water supply. Here, till late at night, and again before dawn, one may hear the constant clang of the iron bucket in which the peasant draws up water from the well.

The Biharis are often said to be a "sluggish and depressed peasantry" far different from, if not inferior to, "the quick-witted and adaptive Bengali" of the deltaic rice swamps. The charge, apparently much too sweeping, overlooks other qualities, especially those of stability of character and power of conduct. Though they are, it is true, quite conservative and mostly wanting in the mental versatility and education of the Bengalis, an exception must be made of the writer caste of Kayasthas, of Maithils and of Bhumihars, whose shrewdness and acumen are proverbial. On the whole, they are men of slow thoughts but long memories, vigorous and disciplined traits acknowledged and appreciated by the Bengalis themselves, who often employ them to guard their persons and property in preference to their own men. The Bhojpur people, or inhabitants of Saran and Rohtas, in particular, are deficient neither in enterprise nor in resourcefulness. They are, according to Sir George Grierson,

> an energetic race ever ready to accommodate themselves to circumstances. An alert and active nationality, with few scruples and considerable abilities, dearly loving a fight for

> fighting's sake, they have spread all over Aryan India, each man ready to carve his fortune out of any opportunity which may present itself to him. They furnish a rich mine of recruitment to the Hindustani army, and, on the other hand, they took a prominent part in the mutiny of 1857. As fond as an Irishman is of his stick, the long-boned, stalwart Bhojpuri, with his staff in his hand, is a familiar object striding over fields far from his home. Thousands of them have emigrated to British Colonies and have returned rich; every year still larger numbers wander over Northern Bengal and seek employment, either honestly as *palki-bearers* or otherwise as dacoits. Every Bengali zamindar keeps a posse of these men, euphemistically called *darwans,* to keep his tenants in order. Calcutta, where they are employed and feared by the less heroic natives of Bengal, is full of them.

The Tribal Population

The tribal population, constituting 8.29 per cent of the total population of Bihar, is divided into 30 different tribal groups.[7] Representatives of the Negrito, Proto-Australoid, Mongoloid, Mediterranean and Nordic races are found in the population of Bihar. Certain Negrito features were noticed by anthropologists among the aborigines of the Rajmahal Hills, but the nature of evidence about their existence is rather hazy. The Proto-Australoid features are found in the Kharwar Munda, Bhumij and Mai Pahariyas. They are said to have absorbed much from other racial stocks as well. Some admixture of Mongoloid blood may be found among the Tharus of Champaran. The racial history of the Austric-speaking groups is still shrouded in traditional antiquity and in spite of all painstaking researches, no clear picture of the origin and composition of these tribals of Bihar has emerged. Austric speaking groups include Munda, Santhal, Ho, Birhor, Kharia and others. There is a considerable difference between the Mundas and the Oraons. The differences between the Santhals and the Sauria Pahariyas are significant as they

are indicative of the differences between the Austric-speaking and the Dravidian-speaking people.

The chief representatives of the Dravidian races inhabiting the tribal region of Bihar are the Hos, the Santhals, the Oraons, and the Mundas, and they together constitute almost four-fifths of the total tribal population of the State. More than one half of the Santhals are found in Santhal Parganas division and about a quarter in Hazaribagh and Singhbhum taken together. Numerically, however, they are not negligible in Dhanbad, Purnia, Munger and Bhagalpur. Over three-fourths of the Oraons are confined to Ranchi and Palamu comes next, but with only about 11 per cent of the total Oraon population. The Oraons are also found in a few blocks in Rohtas and Champaran districts. Nearly three-fourths of the Mundas are found in Ranchi district and the bulk of the balance in Singhbhum. The Hos, on the other hand, are virtually confined to Singhbhum alone. These four tribes, which are comparatively advanced, have taken to settled cultivation as their mode of life and are gradually getting the benefits of the employment available in the mineral and industrial undertakings scattered over the plateau region. There are, however, a few tribals who have yet to take to settled cultivation or are still dependent largely on food gathered from the forest to sustain themselves. Asur and Korwa communities are still very backward and deserve assistance through special programmes. Birjhia is a community, akin to Asur, with a literacy rate of only 4.8 per cent. The Chick Baraik community, with 11.2 per cent literacy, engages itself in weaving cloth; the Lohara, with 7 per cent literacy, and Karmali, with 5.2 per cent literacy rate, are both blacksmiths who make agricultural implements, etc; the Mahlis, with a literacy rate of 6 per cent, are mostly bamboo workers and blacksmiths; the Kisans, with 5.1 per cent literacy rate, are settled cultivators noted for their industrious agricultural activities; and the Birjhias, with 8 per cent literacy rate,

are also settled cultivators and keep cattle as well. The largest chunk (93.7 per cent) of the tribal population still lives in the rural areas.

The Santhals

The Santhals still preserve two features inherited from an earlier stage of civilization. They excel in clearing forests and show considerable skill in converting jungle and wasteland into fertile rice fields. "When", writes Colonel Dalton, '"through their own labour the spread of cultivation has effected denudation, they select a new site, however prosperous they may have been on the old, and retire into the backwoods, where their harmonious flutes sound sweeter, their drums find deeper echoes, and their bows and arrows may once more be utilized." Moreover, they are excellent hunters, as destructive of game as of jungle. Their happiest day in the year is that on which they have a common hunt, when, armed with spears, axes, bows and arrows, clubs, sticks and stones, they beat through the jungle in thousands, killing every beast and bird they come across. There was a time when in their ordinary dealings they displayed a cheerful straightforwardness, open bluntness and simple honesty, which were refreshing to those accustomed to the somewhat gloomy and secretive denizen of the plains. Their word, it is said, was their bond, and a knot on a string was as good as a receipt. Their contact with the non-tribals has, however, metamorphosed their way of life.

The Hos

Those who have known the Hos agree as to their good qualities and are struck with their manly independent bearing. They are according to Colonel Dalton, "physically and morally superior to the Mundas, Bhumij and Santhals". Most Europeans, who came in contact with the Hos, found them wasting their stores of rice in making rice-

beer for their various festivals and parting with their lands for the most inadequate price, for they were "like children in the hands of the foreign trader". Even today the Hos are remarkable for their exclusiveness and insensitiveness to outside influence.

The Mundas

The Mundas, found in the south of the Ranchi district and the Khunti subdivision, are divided into a number of exogamous clans known as *kilis.* Though they were gleaners and hunters not long ago, they have now "entered the maze of industrial economy. They live in urban surroundings, eat food available from the markets, spend money on jewellery and trinkets which they never did before and, what is more, join in demonstrations, shout slogans, strike work and have produced leaders from among themselves".[8]

The Oraons

The Oraons, a Dravidian-speaking, short-statured, narrow-headed and broad-nosed people living mostly in the Ranchi and Palamu districts, are divided, like Mundas, into several clans or *gotras.* While there are many resemblances between the two communities, the Oraons are much less conservative and exclusive than the Mundas. Oraon youths, with their jaunty appearance, have their hair tied in a knot behind, and a small mirror stuck in it, and ornaments in their ears. The headman of their village is called the Mahto and the official who presides over their spiritual affairs is the Pahan. The Mundas worship Sing Bonga—the sun-god and supreme being—and also their ancestors whose spirits are known as the *Ora-bongako* or the household gods. They have a tradition of having come from the south and seem to have displaced the Mundas from many of the areas in the Ranchi district where they lived. The Oraons employ methods of cultivation which are

much advanced compared with those of other tribes in Bihar. Their most important social institution, now nearly dead, is the *Dhumkuria* or the boys' youth dormitory, an institution which has put them on the ethnographic map of the world.

The Bhumis Kols

The Bhumij Kols, who occupy parts of the two Singhbhum districts west and south of the Kasai river, are ethnically related to the Mundas and resemble them in physical appearance. Dark brown in complexion, they have thick noses and lips, broad chests, well-developed hands and are short in stature. Since they claim to be Hindus and employ Brahman priests, they are accepted as such, but their exact position in the Hindu caste hierarchy is not yet well defined. Nor do they appear to have fully assimilated the essential elements of Hinduism and completely jettisoned their tribal religion, for many among them still worship their own village deities. Their totemic exogamous clans are fast being forgotten and they have adopted the surname of 'Singh'. Their agricultural technique is not so advanced.

The Cheros

The Cheros, who have a Dravidian physiognomy and vary in colour, at one time ruled over the Gangetic provinces and claim to be Rajputs. In Palamu they retained their dominant position till the advent of the British Government. They are divided into two sections, Barahazar and Tarahazar. The former rank as the higher and include most descendants to the former ruling families in Palamu. The social status of the Cheros was very high even in the Mughal period and they were given the rank of Mansabdars in Akbar's court. Their children are invested with the sacred thread by a Brahman priest at the time of marriage. Agriculture is their original occupation, but

nowadays they keep shop, do carting, work on roads or in coal-mines, and collect *tasar,* lac and catechu. They are on the whole a proud race and have never forgotten that they were once a great people and that their descent an honourable one. They are also found in the villages of Rohtas and in the Morang region.

Kharias

In addition to these, there are the Kharias, the vast majority of whom are found in the Ranchi and Singhbhum districts. The Hill Kharias practise a crude type of shifting cultivation and hunt with bows and arrows, sticks, and sometimes with spears. The Birhors are mostly found in the districts of Hazaribagh and Ranchi. The Uthlu, or Bhulia Birhors, are semi-migratory and usually live in huts made of twigs and leaves but during the rains in semi-permanent settlements. They sustain themselves by gathering wild forest produce, including honey and beeswax, by hunting deer and other animals and by catching birds and monkeys.

Pahariyas

The Sauna Pahariyas live in the inaccessible hilly region and are confined to the Godda, Rajmahal and Pakur subdivisions. They are perhaps the only tribe that does not possess any totemic clans. The Mai Pahariyas, a Hinduized section of the Pahariya tribe, employ advanced methods of cultivation, invariably using plough and bullocks to till the small tablelands of the plateau, on which they raise quite substantial dry crops.

We may conclude by saying that we are still uncertain about the racial composition of the various tribal groups of Bihar, such as the Mundas, Santhals, Hos, Birhors, Kharias and others. The Oraons along with the Kolarians have been placed by some in the pre-Dravidian group. The

Mundas have a peculiar hybrid combination and these hybrids have issued from intermarriage between Munda men and women of other tribes.

The Industrial Population

In the manufacturing centres of the south Bihar plateau, a large industrial population has grown up during the last four decades which has many of the characteristics of similar classes in other states. The Bihari workingmen are skilful and intelligent, and the charge of laziness and of incapacity for continued application is no longer justified. There is, however, among them a spirit of restlessness and discontent which, on more than one occasion, has broken out into open revolt, but which recently has tended to run in the less violent channels of peaceful strikes. Trade unionism finds many adherents among the workingmen of Bihar, and its chief strongholds are to be found in the manufacturing districts. Considering the number of persons engaged in non-agricultural livelihood, Dhanbad is apparently at the top with 22 per cent of its population engaged in such livelihood, followed by Singhbum with 10 per cent. According to the figures revealed by the census (1981), main workers comprise 29.68 per cent, marginal workers 2.57 per cent and non-workers comprise 67.65 per cent of the total population of Bihar. The percentage of main workers in the rural area is 30.23 per cent and in the urban area 25.82 per cent.[9]

Wages have very much improved, and the conditions of the labourers and artisans are far more favourable than those of many other categories of workingmen and agricultural labourers. The strikes have, in many instances, contributed not a little to their betterment, but it is to be hoped that they will have the good sense to understand that they cannot be repeated indefinitely.

Bihar through the Ages

The region now known as the State of Bihar was for many centuries the focal point of north Indian political power. From before the days of the Buddha it was one of the major centres of Indian political activity and Brahmanical civilization, and from south Bihar there came the primary impetus which led to the foundation of the first all-India empire, that of the Mauryas. Not only has Bihar played a very important part in India's political life, but also the region has been the scene of the lifework of the founders of two great religions of the world, Gautama Buddha and Mahavira. It was under a *pipal* tree at Bodh Gaya in Bihar that Siddhartha Gautama attained omniscience and became known as the Buddha or the Enlightened One; it was here that many of his most important sermons were preached; and from here the doctrines of later Buddhism spread to south-east Asia and the Far East. Two of Bihar's great medieval monasteries such as Nalanda and Vikramshila were centres of pilgrimage for Buddhists coming from all over Asia, and the vigorous intellectual life of these monastic universities made a great impact upon the whole history of the vast peninsula.[10] It is said that about the tenth century of our era, full one-half of the world's inhabitants followed the teachings of Gautama. The Buddhist temple at Bodh Gaya, the Cyclopean walls at Rajgir, the remains of Pataliputra and Vaishali, the splendid tombs of Yahya Shah Maneri and Daulat Shah, the mausoleum of Sher Shah at Sasaram, and the birth-place of Guru Govind Singh at Patna tell their own tale.

Bihar's Antiquity

North Bihar, lying along one of the great lines of Aryan immigration, was occupied at an early period by races of Aryan descent; and according to the legend of

Mathava Videha preserved in the *Satpath Brahmana,* it was here that the Videhas settled on the migration from the Punjab. The legend also relates that Gotama Rahugana, the family priest, accompanied the Videhas on their march eastwards from the banks of the Saraswati and that when they came to the bank of the Gandak, they stopped, for land on the further bank of the river had not been purified by Agni, the God of fire Agni, at the behest of Mathava, agreed to cross, and thenceforward the Videhas lived to the east of Gandak, where they cleared the marshes, cultivated the virgin soil, and founded a great and powerful kingdom. This kingdom was in course of time ruled over by King Janaka, round whose name a halo of legend clings. Under his rule, according to Hindu, mythology, the Kingdom of Mithila was the most civilized kingdom in India. His court, a centre of learning, attracted the most learned men of the time. Vedic literature was enriched the studies of the scholars who flocked there, and his chief priest. Yajnavalkya, inaugurated the stupendous task of revising the *Yajur Veda.* The speculations of the monarch himself enshrined, in the sacred books of India called the *Upanishads,* are still cherished with veneration by the Hindu community. The history and traditions of Bihar thus go back to the earliest dawn of human civilization. The relics of the wonder that was Bihar can still be seen dotted all over the State.

Magadha

The *Atharva Veda* contains numerous references to the Vratyas, who, according to some historians, were the pre-Aryan inhabitants of Magadha or Bihar. The term 'Magadha' also occurs later Vedic literature, either in the sense of a Magadhan, a bard, or a member of the caste by that name. The first breath of real life in Bihar comes with Bimbisara, who reigned during the sixth century B.C. and established matrimonial alliances with Kosala, Vaishali and Madra, thus extending his influence by dynastic

marriages. He also extended it by war, as many Indian kings throughout history seem to have done. Bimbisara was no exception. He, we know, conquered and annexed the principality of Anga, modern Bhagalpur and Monghyr, and built the city of New Rajagriha, which lies at the base of the hill below the old fort. But there is something in his reign which grips our attention more than conquests or buildings. During it, and under his rule, the founders of two great religions gave to the world their solutions of the problem of life. In all probability both Gautama Buddha and Mahavira were born in Bimbisara's days: it is certain that he must have heard the first teachings of Buddhism and Jainism preached at his palace doors. He is supposed to have reigned for nearly twenty-five years.

Bimbisara, we are told, was deposed, imprisoned, and ultimately starved to death by his son and successor, Ajatashatru; for in one of the earliest extant Buddhist manuscripts, there is an account of the guilty son's confession to the Blessed One (i.e. the Buddha) in these words: "Sin overcame me, Lord, weak and foolish, and wrong that I am, in that for the sake of sovereignty I put to death my father, that righteous man, that righteous king."

The dynasty of Bimbisara lasted three or four generations longer, and was followed at some time before the middle of the fourth century by the Nanda dynasty. But hardly anything definite is known about this early period. In fact, a detailed historical narrative does not become possible until the accession of Chandragupta Maurya, the first paramount sovereign emperor of India, in 321 B.C. But there can be no doubt that the Kingdom of Magadha continued its aggressive career and extended its sway overall the States of the Ganga-Chambal Valley, including the powerful Kingdoms of Kosala, Vatsa, and Avanti. Towards the close of the fifth or early in the fourth century B.C. the dynasty of Sisunagas, which had succeeded the line of Haryanka, was replaced by a new family of the Nine Nandas. Mahapadma

Ugrasena, the first Nanda, was a powerful king, whom the *Puranas* described as an *Ekarat* or sole monarch. He destroyed the neighbouring Kshatriya dynasties and brought the whole of the Ganga Valley and perhaps Kalinga under "one umbrella". He was followed by his eight sons, the last of whom was known as Dhana Nand or Nanda, the Rich-the Xandrames or Agrammes of Greek writers. This monarch was said to command a force of 20,000 horses, 200,000 foot, 2,000 chariots, and 3,000 or 4,000 elephants.

Madhyadesha and Anga

The region now included within the districts of Monghyr and Bhagalpur formed part of Anga. Its alluvial plain, it is said, "has been ploughed and sown from the earliest times by the same people, swayed by various rulers, who elsewhere have left more tangible records of their dominion". The town of Monghyr itself has been identified with Modagiri, a place mentioned in the *Mahdabharata,* which was the capital of a kingdom in Eastern India near Banga and Tamralipta, i.e. Bengal and Tamluk. At the dawn of history, Monghyr was apparently part of the old Hindu Kingdom of Anga, the capital of which was at Champa near modern Bhagalpur, while a portion of the west of the present district was included within the limits of the Kingdom of Magadha. Anga is said to have been an independent kingdom till the sixth century B.C., after which it was annexed by Bimbisara, the ambitious contemporary of Buddha (c. 519 B.C.), and it appears never to have regained its independence, the Raja of Anga in the time of Buddha being simply a well-to-do nobleman, of whom little or nothing is known except that he granted a pension to a Brahman.

Vajjis

During the later Vedic period the Aryans gradually spread over the Gangetic plain and before the close of the

age adventurers crossed the great barrier of mountains and forests in Central India and established powerful kingdoms in the Deccan to the north of the Godavari. In or about the sixth century B.C. we find sixteen great States besides a number of smaller principalities flourishing in the extensive region between the Hindukush and the Godavari. It is interesting to note that some of these States, the Vajji-Lichchhavi confederation in north Bihar, for example, were oligarchical 'republics'. They skirted the area of the kingdoms to the north and north-west; the monarchies developed largely in the Ganga area, where rice came to be grown and where society became more organized. In general, the 'republics' were smaller than the kingdoms, although a few of the kingdoms were very small.

Modern historical researches have revealed that the Vajjian[11] republic in north Bihar, which had apparently replaced the old monarchical rule of Videha, was established much earlier than the rise of Buddhism. The Lichchhavis of Vaishali were the most important and influential clan of the Vajjian republic. Another important clan was the Jnatrikas to which family Vardhamana Mahavira belonged. The growing power of the Lichchhavis brought them into collision with the powerful Kindgom of Magadha. Bimbisara, the founder of the Magadhan imperial power, had strengthened his position by matrimonial alliances with the more powerful of the neighbouring states, taking one consort from the royal family of Kosala, a kingdom to the west of Tirhut, and another from the influential Lichchhavi clan at Vaishali. His murder by his son, Ajatashatru, involved the parricide in war with the aged king of Kosala, whose sister, the queen of the murdered Bimbisara, is said to have died of grief. This war ending with the complete victory of Ajatashatru, his ambition next induced him to undertake the conquest of the country now known as Tirhut, in which the Lichchhavi clan occupied a prominent position. The

invasion was successful. The Lichchhavi capital, Vaishali, was occupied (c. 484 B.C.); and Ajatashatru carried his victorious arms to their natural limit; the foot of the mountains. From this time the whole country between the Ganga and the Himalayas became subject, more or less directly, to the sovereignty of Magadha.

Though the Lichchhavis were defeated by Ajatashatru, the powerful Vajjian confederacy did not break up, and Vaishali continued to be the centre of political as well as a religious life north of the Ganga. It contained a stupa erected by the Lichchhavis over some of the relics of Buddha's body, and another enshrining some of the remains of his great disciple, Ananda: it was crowded with Buddhist monasteries. According to the account left by Hiuen Tsang some centuries later, both within and without the city and all round it the sacred places were so numerous that it would be difficult to recount them. It was here that the second great Council of the Buddhist Church was held, a council necessitated by the laxity of the Vajjian monks, who asserted the legality of certain relaxations of the rule of discipline.

The Great Mauryas

Of the seven kings of the Maurya dynasty, two gained for themselves an abiding place in the category of great world rulers. Their names are Chandragupta and Ashoka. Grandfather and grandson, they made their mark in such curiously diverse ways that they stand to this day as examples of war and peace.

While still a lad, Chandragupta Maurya is said to have met Alexander during the latter's brief summer halt among the Punjab Doabs. The identification, indeed, of the Sandracottus mentioned by Greek writers with Chandragupta has been of incalculable value in enabling historians to fix other dates. It has been, as it were, a secure foundation for a superstructure which has grown,

and still grows, year by year, and in which every new stone discovered is found to fit accurately into its place.

At the time of this meeting, Chandragupta was a nameless adventurer, a political exile from Magadha. But he was also ambitious, capable, energetic, and seized the first opportunity that came his way of rising to power. This came with the news of Alexander's death in 323 B.C. In the instant revolt of conquered India which followed, he took a prominent part, and found himself, in 321 B.C., with an army at his back. He led it to Magadha, and taking advantage of the Nanda king's unpopularity, slew every male member of the family. Except in as far as the principals were concerned, this revolution appears to have been easy and bloodless. At least so we gather from the play called *Mudrarakshasa,* which, though not written till nearly twelve hundred years after the event, seems fairly trustworthy. In fact, Chanakya, the wily Brahman—whose advice had been Chandragupta's best weapon in gaining the throne—realizing the insecurity of that throne without the hearty support of the nobles and, above all, of the late King's Prime Minister, sets himself by sheer diplomacy to cut the ground from under the feet of his master's enemies and, succeeding, yields up his signet of office to the appeased Rakshasa, whose final aside when he accepts it—"Oh! Vile Chanakya—say rather, Wise Chanakya, a mine of wisdom inexhaustible. An unfavourable ocean stored with excellent rare gems" — shows that he feels himself overmastered by sheer wit.

The remainder of Chandragupta's career, however, was anything but bloodless. He made war on the generals of Alexander and, in the words of a Roman historian, "shook the yoke of one of the ablest commanders of Alexander, who had carved out a kingdom for himself in Syria and other countries of Western Asia, made an attempt to reconquer the Punjab, but failed. He was forced to make peace with Chandragupta and surrender four of

the provinces of his empire, embracing the greater part of modern Afghanistan and Baluchistan. He also entered into a matrimonial alliance with his Indian rival and sent to his court an ambassador named Megasthenes. The overthrow of the Nandas and the expulsion of the Greeks made Chandragupta Maurya the undisputed ruler of an empire that eventually stretched from the Hindukush mountain to Tanjore in the south and from the Indus Valley to beyond the Hooghly. If tradition is to be believed, Chandragupta was able to establish a connection with the southern country of Mysore where the great Emperor is said to have spent the last years of his life.

Megasthenes

The Greek ambassador to the Maurya court was a shrewd observer of men and affairs, and left an interesting account of the people of India and the institutions of the period. His account of Pataliputra[12] in particular gives us a marvellous picture of the grip which the government had on the people for their good. Every department, especially the land revenue and irrigation, both of paramount importance in an Indian state, was legislated with utmost care, and though the whole system of government was based on the personal power of the king, it was far from being a mere arbitrary autocracy. Theft was a thing of very rare occurrence among the people. They never drank wine except at sacrifices. No Indian was accused of lying, and it was contrary to usage for an Indian either to do or to suffer wrong. Men of the cultivating class were regarded as public benefactors and protected from all harm. Strict control was maintained over all affairs by means of spies to whom was assigned the duty of watching all that went on and of making reports secretly to the king. The strength of the government was not a little due to a fine standing army, which comprised 600,000 infantry, 30,000 cavalry, 9,000 elephants and a large number of chariots. There was also a fleet under an admiral. The affairs of the army and the

navy were like those of the imperial capital, entrusted to a governing body of thirty divided into six boards of five each. There was also a body of rural officials who looked after irrigation, land revenue and public works. They constructed roads and set up pillars to show the by-roads and distances. Mutilation was one of the modes of punishment.

Pataliputra

The kingdom of Magadha had its capital at Pataliputra, near modern Patna on the sacred river Ganga in Bihar. The city was for centuries one of the great foci of Indian history; even later emperors had their capitals there, and philosophers, artists and preachers came to their courts. In the sixth century B.C., the Buddha spent much of his life wandering in this area and preaching his sermons. Naturally, therefore, some of the chief shrines of Buddhism, monuments and places of worship of which devout Buddhists made pilgrimages are located in Bihar. As a matter of fact, Bihar was a stronghold of Buddhism even when most of India had turned away to Hinduism.

Pataliputra, the imperial capital, stood at the confluence of the Son and the Ganga. "At the site of the ancient Pataliputra", observes Sister Nivedita, "almost where Bankipore stands today, he (Buddha) entered the Kingdom of Magadha. For ages they called the river-crossing Gautam's Ferry, and told how on his last journey north. He stood and watched the building of the first of its fortifications foretelling the future greatness of the capital."[13] The city in those days was more than fourteen kilometres in length and about three kilometres in breadth. Protected by a ditch and by walls that had 570 towers and 64 gates, it offered considerable amenities of life to its ordinary citizens under the regulations of its municipality. Every street had its water-courses serving as house drains and issuing ultimately into the moat. Their obstruction by

deposit of rubbish or any other article was punished. Though the imperial palace was chiefly built of wood, it excelled in splendour the palaces of the kings of Persia. The administration of the capital city was placed in charge of a council of 30, divided into six boards of five each. They were entrusted with the following duties: supervision of the mechanical arts, care of foreigners, registration of births and deaths, control of trade and commerce, supervision of manufactured articles and collection of the tenth of the prices of the articles sold. Megasthenes refers to a town official called *Astonomoi,* one of whose functions, according to Kautilya, was 'supervision of factories'. Kautilya observes that these factories in the cities were cotton factories, the industry of spinning and weaving, the manufacture of gold, silver and jewellery which was pre-eminently a city industry and also the working of metals others than gold and silver, the armaments industry, the building industry, the state mint, the manufacture of dairy products and of forest products. According to the *Mahavamsa Tika,* Chanakya came all the way from Takshila to Pataliputra in pursuit of learning and disputation centred at that imperial capital." It is an extraordinary compliment paid to the status of Pataliputra as the intellectual capital of India in those days when a scholar of encyclopaedic learning like Chanakya, himself the product of one of the greatest centres of learning like Takshasila, should seek to win fresh laurels for his learning at this far-off city in eastern India"[14]

Ashoka

Chandragupta died in 297 B.C., having reigned for 24 years. A short enough time indeed in which to have accomplished so much. Of his son, Bindusara, we do not know much, not even if he was born of the Greek princess. It is on record, however, that he was extremely fond of figs and, presumably, of learning. From his letter to Antiochus, the son of Seleukos Nikator, he asks naively for the

purchase and despatch of green figs and a professor! The new king is also said to have maintained the integrity of the empire and suppressed revolts in outlying provinces. He is also credited by some authors with the conquest of the Deccan. The King of Syria and Western Asia, probably the successor of Seleukos, sent to his court an envoy named Deimachos. Another envoy was sent to him or his successor by the king of Egypt.

Bindusara handed on the empire which he had received intact to his son, Ashoka Priyadarshin, after a reign of twenty-five years. Ashoka is almost universally regarded as, next to Akbar, the Great Mughal, the greatest and the most renowned of all Indian sovereigns. Curiously enough, both claimed preeminence as apostles of a Faith in the Unknown; both appealed to the people on transcendental grounds.

In his early years, Ashoka was a typical Magadhan ruler, whose one thought was the extension of his dominions. In his role as king, however, he "was not the naive convert to Buddhism that Buddhist sources would have us believe".[15] He was not an extremely wicked man suddenly converted to a life of piety. It is historically incorrect "to refer to a precise point during his reign as the moment of his conversion to Buddhism".[16] In fact, as Vincent A. Smith has rightly pointed out, the emperor had become a religious convert early in life and as the years rolled on his religious zeal also increased.[17] Finally, his energies and, his riches were spent almost entirely on the work of honouring and propagating the teachings of the Buddha, the doctrine of the sanctity of life. Forty-one years afterwards, when his long and peaceful reign (273-232 B.C.), marred by but one war, had come to an end, he had earned for himself the well-deserved title of The Loving-minded One, Beloved of the Gods'. A great change in any man's life: but nothing compared with the change which his life was to bring about in this world.

In 260 B.C., when he came under the mingled influence of Buddhism and Jainism, those creeds appear to have been little more than sectarian beliefs confined to India which had given them birth. When he died, Buddhism had spread through Asia, and had touched both Africa and Europe.

For some thirty years of his life, he had set himself to alter the faith of the world; for he believed wholeheartedly, not in ritual or dogma, but in something which—hard to be translated into English—is best rendered by the phrase 'Law of Piety'. And these edicts explain it to be "mercy and charity, truth and purity, kindness and goodness". As to how this gospel of goodwill was to be preached, we learn from these edicts also. It is by example, by tolerance, by "gentleness and moderation in speech".

"Government by religion, law by religion, progress by religion." This was Ashoka's rule, and in it he stands alone as the only king who subordinated all things to a faith which must only be preached in gentleness and moderation. "No matter how we see it", says a modern historian, "we have to remember that what we are discussing all the time is the ideal that Ashoka set up. He seems to have been a very selfless man, to judge by the ideal but the point is that it is an ideal, and we have little detailed knowledge of how far he succeeded in putting it into practice."[18] True, but we have enough detailed knowledge of the influence he exerted on Indian rulers and public men long after he had passed away. The dream of a united India under one ruler wielding unquestioned authority "from one end up to the further side of the country bounded by the ocean" came near realization in his days; and "today the Buddhism of the Eastern World is the harvest of the seed first sown by the missionaries of Ashoka... in the whirligig of time. When the Tricolour flag of saffron, white and green was raised in Delhi on the Independence Day, 1947, it was charged with the design of the Wheel of Ashoka copied from the Lion Pillar at Sarnath".[19]

The Decline of The Mauryas

The deliberate abandonment of military activity by Ashoka certainly did not increase his empire's capacity for defence, and after his death in about 237 B.C. the power that had hurled back the battalions of Seleukos proved unequal to the task of protecting the imperial dominions from the attacks of the Greek Princelings of Bactria. Division into two kingdoms—one, an independent sovereignty in Kashmir and the other in Magadha—was the beginning of an end which brought both disruption and war, and in less than three centuries India was invaded by Eurasian Greeks, Scythians (known as Sakas), Parthians, and the Kushan nation of the Yueh-chi who had migrated from the Great Wall of China. Each of these successive invaders who entered India from the north-west overcame the medley of small kingdoms he found in the same way that Alexander had done, and carved out an empire large or small in the North each in turn becoming merged in the people they had conquered: an impressive feature of Indian history.

Among the successors of Ashoka, Dasharatha, Ashoka's grandson, was the only sovereign who governed the home provinces with some ability and whose descendants continued to claim the imperial titles and rule Magadha, with perhaps some neighbouring districts, until 184 B.C. The last ruler of the dynasty, Brihadratha, was assassinated by his general, Pushyamitra, who seized the throne and founded the Sunga dynasty in about 186-187 B.C. But with the downfall of the Mauryas, the political unity of India disappeared. The Sungas, to whom tradition assigns a duration of one hundred and twelve years, appear to have failed to arrest the centrifugal forces which had their full play till the advent of Samudragupta on the scene. Kharavela of Kalinga, a contemporary of Pushyamitra Sunga, invaded. Magadha twice and defeated

its Sovereign in the battle of Gorathagiri (Barabar Hills), harassed Rajagriha and approached Pataliputra.

The imperial family of the Sungas came to an end in 75 B.C., when it was overthrown by Vasudeva, who founded the Kanva dynasty, which numbered only four kings and lasted for no more than forty-five years. The last Kanva ruler of Magadha was overthrown by one of the Andhra monarchs who annexed his dominions. The Andhra kingdom about this time was one of the most powerful states in India. Its ruling dynasty survived until about A.D. 230, when it is said to have disappeared in the course of an unrecorded revolution.

Invasion by Foreigners

About this time, the exact dates being a matter of dispute, Pataliputra seems to have suffered a great deal at the hands of the Bactrians, the Greeks and the Saka-Kushanas. While the citizens offered a valiant resistance to the Bactrian Greeks, they could not stand the barbarous attacks of the Sakas, who massacred nearly half its population and carried away a large number of captives. The Bharasivas, however, rescued the city from the clutches of these foreigners. We learn from a drama called *Kaumudi Mahotsava,* that Magadha was ruled by Sundaravarmana of the Kota dynasty just before the foundation of the Gupta empire. Sundaravarmana, it is said, had made the Suganga Palace his residence, a palace built on the bank of the Ganga at Pataliputra. [20]

The Gupta Dynasty

We are also told that, during the decay of the Kushan power, the Lichchhavis of north Bihar, who had given Bimbisara much trouble, seem to have extended their power to the south across the Ganga, and to have occupied Pataliputra, the ancient imperial capital.[21] It was to check the inroads of these bold hill folk that Bimbisara had first

built the watchfort of Pataliputra, the modern Patna. Of the history of this warlike clan during these long intervening years nothing is known, but they must have kept their independence, for a princess, Kumaradevi by name, emerges from obscurity as a person of importance, apparently an heiress. Whether she was the reigning princess is not clear but it is possible that this was the case, and that about this time the Lichchhavis were in actual possession of Pataliputra. This princess, Kumaradevi, chose to marry one Chandragupta, a local chief at or near Pataliputra. On the strength of this alliance, Chandragupta became the King of Pataliputra and laid claim to a paramount position over the neighbouring powers. He extended his dominions along the Ganga valley as far as Prayag (Allahabad) and Oudh and assumed the sovereign title of *Maharajadhiraja.* His success was great enough to warrant his founding an eradating from A.D. 320, called the Gupta era, which continued to be in existence for several centuries.

Chandragupta seems to have died while still young, leaving his son, apparently a boy, to reign in his stead. A precocious stripling, this boy Samudragupta, was to reign over India as it had seldom been reigned for more than half a century. Prayagprashasti or the Allahabad pillar inscription carved by his court poet Harisena is the basic source of our information about him, though it is likely that his might and glory have been exaggerated. He completed the subjection of the Gangetic provinces as far as the Yamuna and the Chambal by uprooting the local chieftains, among whom Chandravermana and Ganapati Naga were the most important. In truth, whatever this "Indian Napoleon" saw "he coveted, what he coveted he conquered". The result was that he built a mighty empire which included "all India as far south as Malabar, as far north as Assam and Nepal. It was thus larger than any since the days of Ashoka, though the southward sweep of Samudragupta's victorious armies cannot, in the nature of

things, have been much more than a raid." According to Vincent A. Smith, Samudragupta extended the limits of his empire on the east to the Brahmaputra, on the north to the Himalayas, on the west to the Sutlej, Yamuna, and Betwa rivers, and on the south to the Narmada. Moreover, he had in subordinate alliance the frontier kingdoms of the Gangetic delta, and of the southern slopes of the Himalayas as well as the free tribes of Malwa and Rajputana. On the north-western frontier, he maintained close diplomatic relations with the Kushan King and permitted the Ceylonese monarch, Meghavarna, to build a convent at Bodh Gaya.

Unlike Ashoka, Samudragupta was a Brahmanical Hindu who crowned his military successes with the performance of the ancient horse sacrifice. The event is of great importance. It marks the final triumph of the forces of *Brahmanism* that had been struggling for ascendancy since the days of Pushyamitra Sunga. The supremacy of *Brahmanism* in the reign of the imperial Guptas did not, however, mean oppression of other religious sects, for the Gupta emperors were all punctilious in their observance of the policy of toleration. That Samudragupta took delight in patronizing art of all kinds is proved beyond doubt by the great number of eminent men whose works date from his reign, and from the reign of his son, Chandragupta II, who, on his coronation, took the name of Vikramaditya, the latter being, of course, the one associated in the Indian mind with the splendid renaissance of national learning and art. To us Vikramaditya is synonymous with the zenith of India's glory, though it is open to question whether the hero's father may not lay claim to a lion's share of the record of great achievements.

Fa-Hien (A.D. 405-411)

A flood of light is shed on the state of the country in the days of Chandragupta II (A.D. 380-413), who shifted the

capital of the Gupta empire from Pataliputra to Ujjain. (After the conquest of western India, he founded the latter city to be more centrally situated than the former traditional capital of India.) According to our traveller, the people appear to have vied with one another in virtue. All sorts of charitable institutions existed, and the description of a hospital at Pataliputra, endowed by benevolence, is worth quoting. Fa-Hien observed: "hither come all poor or helpless patients suffering from every sort of infirmity. They receive help of all kinds gratuitously, and a doctor attends to them; food and medicine being given according to their wants. Thus they are made quite comfortable, and when they are well they may go away." Thus, once more, says a historian, "the East saw light sooner than the West; for the first hospital in Europe only struggled into existence more than five hundred years after this one at Magadha."

Fa-Hien resided in the city for three years while learning to read Sanskrit and to converse in this language.

Hiuen-Tsang

Another description of Pataliputra is supplied by Hiuen-Tsang, who visited the city after his return from Nepal, in A.D. 637, more than a hundred years after the fall of the Gupta empire. At that time Magadha was ruled by Harshavardhana, the great king of Kanauj. Hiuen-Tsang informs us that the old city, originally called Kusumapura[22], had been deserted for a long time and it lay almost in ruins. The causes which contributed to this catastrophe are not known, except that the Hun invasion seems to have caused the rich and enterprising citizens to leave Patna. The large-scale destruction of the monasteries, Hindu temples and Buddhist stupas, which at one time could be counted by the hundreds and of which only two or three remained intact when Hiuen-Tsang visited the city, was due also to a terrible earthquake which

is said to have occurred in Kusumapura or Pataliputra about the year A.D, 530. It is also possible that the city had been sacked during the inroads of the fanatical anti-Buddhist king Sasanka of Bengal.

The University of Nalanda

Though Hiuen-Tsang, the young Chinese scholar and monk, had found Pataliputra in ruins, Nalanda, the great Magadhan monastic city, had become the seat of a great university. He found thousands of scholars flocking to this famous centre of learning from the most distant parts of Asia; and the scholars of the institution were looked upon as models by every Indian. The Chinese monk-pilgrim mentions Shakraditya, who is possibly Kumara Gupta (A.D. 414-455) and Budha Gupta (A.D. 475-500) as being among the founders of the University. The lofty Sangharama, with its numerous towers so symmetrically arranged, its splendid pavilions and *harmikas,* and the temple tops seemed to soar above the mists of the sky. "Around the monasteries there flowed a winding stream of azure water, made more beautiful by blue lotus flowers, with wide-open calyxes: within the temple, beautiful *karnikara* trees trailed their dazzling golden blossom, and outside groves of mango sheltered the dwellings with their thick shade." The biographer of the Chinese scholar does not forget to high light the uniqueness of the University, the subjects taught there and its distinctive dignity, wealth and height of buildings. "The religious, both within and without, always reach a total of ten thousand, and they all follow the doctrine of the Mahayana. The adherents of the eighteen sects are all united there, and all kinds of works are studied, from the popular books, the Vedas, and other writings of the same kind, to medical works, the occult sciences and arithmetic". Within the monastery a hundred pulpits were filled every day, and, the disciples zealously followed the lessons of their masters, without losing a moment.

The scholars there were all 'virtuous men' whose habits of life were serious and strict, and our Chinese pilgrim is loud in praise of them, for never "in the seven hundred years during which the monastery has been in existence" had a single individual infringed rules of discipline:

> The king respects and honours it, and has put aside the revenue from a hundred to was in order to provide for the upkeep of the monks. Two hundred families send them regularly every day several hundred bushels of rice and large supplies of butter and milk. Hence the students ask nothing of any man, procuring without difficulty the four necessary things. Their progress in study and their brilliant successes are due to the liberality of the king.[23]

In the eighth century A.D., Devapala patronized the institution and took an active part in its management and administration. According to his famous Nalanda inscriptions, Balaputradeva, the king of Java and Sumatra, having been "attracted by the manifold excellence of Nalanda ... built here a monastery, which was the abode of the assembly of monks of various good qualities and was white with the series of stuccoed and lofty dwellings". No less than five villages were set apart by this king for the maintenance of the University.

The University is said to have possessed three big library buildings, called Ratnasagar, Ratnoddahi, and Ratnaranjaka. The second one, nine-storied building, was apparently the loftiest. The scholar-teachers of the University did not content themselves with teaching only those who came within the precincts of their great institution. Some of them went to China, Korea, Japan, Tibet and Ceylon to enlighten the people of those countries. The partial end of this famous seat of learning came in or near the year 1197 when the first Muslim invasion of Bihar took place.[24] The great monasteries of Odantapuri (a Bihar town) and Nalanda were sacked by Bakhtiyar Khilji, the

victorious invader, who slaughtered the monks, except for a few who escaped to Nepal, Tibet and South India.

Bihar Under the Guptas

To return, after this digression, to the story of the Guptas, during whose reign the north of India "did see an age of cultural splendour". The dynasty of these rulers of Bihar went down fighting in the latter part of the fifth century, overwhelmed by the incursions of the White Huns of Central Asia. The Huns, who came, like India's other conquerors, from the lands beyond the Hindukush, dominated a third of India for about fifty years, and what was left of the Gupta realm split up into numerous petty kingdoms which could make no great claims to empires. Some Hindu princes now made a bold attempt to sweep the Huns as a ruling power out of India early in the sixth century. Baladitya, a Gupta king of Magadha, and Yasodharman, a tribal ruler of Mandasor, inflicted severe defeats on Mihiragula, who had established the Hun power in the Punjab and eastern Malwa.

Among the Indian princes who distinguished themselves in the fight with the Huns in the latter half of the sixth century A.D., the Maukharis and the rulers of Thanesai stand preeminent. The Maukhari power continued to grow and extended from the Doab and Oudh to Magadha, and had its principal seat probably in the city of Kanauj. The next notable ruler of Magadha was Harsha, a devout Buddhist in his later years. In A.D. 641, after Sasanka, King of Gauda or Karnasuvarna in Bengal, had passed away, he assumed the title of 'King of Magadha' and sent an embassy to China. The empire over which he exercised direct sway stretched from Eastern Punjab to Bihar and Orissa. Even his enemies—the Chalukyas—testify to his unquestioned supremacy over the whole of Uttarapatha (Northern India). With his death, however, his hard-won empire withered away, and the light which

had for a short time radiated from him and illumined the pages of Indian history soon faded away once more.

After Harsha's death, Madhavagupta, who was installed the former as a Vaishali king of Magadha, became an independent king and was regarded by his contemporaries as gifted with the marks of a Chakravarti monarch. His son, Adityasena, succeeded him in A.D. 650 and ruled over the whole of Bihar, parts of Bengal and Uttar Pradesh with Magadha as his capital. He was succeeded by his son Paramabhattaraka Maharajadhiraja Parameshwara Devagupta. He maintained the empire intact. But with the death of Jivitagupta II, who was Devagupta's son and successor, the Gupta dynasty of Magadha as well as its extensive empire came to an inglorious end soon after A.D. 725. The era of Pax-Magadhica established by the Imperial Guptas and restored by Adityasena also ended, and the rich central and lower Gangetic valley—Bihar and Bengal—at once fell a prey to internal disorder and external aggression until the whole region was rescued in A.D. 750 by Gopala, the founder of the Pala Dynasty.

Then came the Pala line of rulers in the eighth century (A.D. 725-1107). The second king of the dynasty, Dharmapala (A.D. 770-810), an earnest patron of Buddhism, built up another empire, and gave to Pataliputra another short period of imperial splendour. Owing to the patronage of the Pala kings, of whose dynasty there are at least two interesting relics in copper plates, known as the Monghyr and Bhagalpur plates, Bihar remained the last refuge of Buddhism in Northern India up to the time of the Muslim conquest, and numerous Buddhistic remains dating back to the time of the Pala kings are still extant in the State. According to tradition, Indra-dyumna (Pala) was the last Hindu ruler reigning at the time of the Muslim conquest.

The University of Vikramashila

Founded in the latter part of the eighth century A.D. by Dharmapala, the Buddhist University of Vikramashila was located at the famous Patharghat Hill on the right bank of the Ganga, about 38 kilometres to the south-east of Bhagalpur. No early account of this monastic university is, however, extant, nor has it been mentioned in Pali or Sanskrit literature. All that we do know about it today is that it was patronized by the Pala kings who helped the University of Nalanda too, though not on the same scale as they did in the case of Vikramashila. In the middle of the eleventh century Atisha, or Dipankara Shrijnana, its famous abbot, visited Tibet at the invitation of the Tibetan king. "He preached the Mahayana and helped to restore Buddhism to an elevated plane, purging it of its magical elements."[25] For a number of years this university was a well-known centre of Tantricism.The works of some of its great scholars who had gone to Tibet and Nepal to spread the Mahayana there are still found in Tibetan literature. When the Tibetan monk-pilgrim Dharmasvamin visited Vikramashila, he found the university completely destroyed before A.D. 1206.[26]

Odantapuri Vihara

Another monastic university, founded by Gopala, was located at Odantapur (modern Bihar Sharif). The Mahavihara seemed to have assumed nsiderable importance during the Pala period, from, say, the ninth century A.D. onwards. As it was in the vicinity of Nalanda, it could never have been as famous a seat of learning as Nalanda or Vikramashila. Possibly only those local students studied there who were refused admission to the University of Nalanda. Shantarakshita (A.D. 706-762), a great scholar from Bengal and high priest of Nalanda Vihara, is said to have built the first regular monastery at Bsam-ya in Tibet, after the model of the famous

Odantapuri Vihara. Shantarakshita and his disciples, Kamalashila and Padmasambhava, translated several Buddhist works into Tibetan. Between 1197 and 1199 Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khilji, with a small force, sacked the Buddhist universitites of Nalanda, Vikramashila, and Odantapuri. Having found a large monastery at Odantapuri and a number of Buddhist viharas in the surrounding region, he named this place Bihar Sharif, from which the state of Bihar has derived its name.

Medieval History of Bihar

We come now to a long stretch of time, beginning from the middle of the eleventh century, in which Bihar suffered from political disintegration. A thousand names jostle one another in confounding confusion. In the century preceding the Turko-Afghan invasion, Mithila was ruled by the Karnatas; Gaya, Hazaribagh, Bhagalpur and Rohtas by petty independent chieftains, while Patna and Monghyr continued to be parts of the Pala empire. Taking advantage of this situation in this region, Ikhtiar-ud-din Muhammad Ibn Bakhtiyar (Bakhtiyar Khilji) invaded south Bihar with a body of wild horsemen and wrested the province from its feeble Pala ruler. But though political supremacy was thus easily secured, the Sultans of Delhi could not establish their direct rule over any wider area than the narrow littoral south of the Ganga. The Muslim power was generally confined to the principal towns and their immediate neighborhood, and the interior of south Bihar was still governed by Hindu princelings. The Karnataka dynasty, established by Nanya Deva, retained its complete independence in Mithila till 1324 when Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq Shah defeated Hari Singh. For over three hundred years after Ikhtiyar-ud-din Muhammad Ibn Bakhtiyar conquered Bihar, the overlordship of Bihar shifted with the changes of fortune in the continual war between rival Muslim powers, from Delhi to Jaunpur and Gaur and other cities.

As early as 1206, Kutub-ud-din Aibek became the ruler of Delhi, having under him a dominion that extended from Delhi to Bengal and from Lahore to Kanauj and Gujarat. After his death, Hisamuddin Iwaz asserted his independence in Bengal and assumed the title of Sultan Ghiyasuddin. He is said to have re-annexed South Bihar, exacted tribute from Tirhut and exercised control over Bhagalpur. When, however, Iltutmish ascended the throne, he found a large part of Bihar under the control of Hindu chieftains. In 1225 he wrested South Bihar from Hisam and placed it under his own Governor Mirza Jani. He was, however, defeated and slain by Iltutmish's son, Nasir-ud-din, Governor of Oudh. We hear of Bihar again in the reign of Firoz Shah (1351-88) when he moved off through this state to Jajnagar in Orissa. Later Sikandar Lodi (1489-1517) appeared on the scene with a prosperous reign of over twenty-eight years, during which he extended his kingdom considerably, ejected his brother from Jaunpur, annexed Bihar, and even advanced into Bengal. In his time, it is said, harvests were plentiful, food was cheap, and the populace contented.

Sher Shah (1540-1545)

The next mention of the state in the Muslim chronicles occurs in connection with the rise of Sher Khan, who took the title of Sher Shah on coming to power. As a reward for his services in the conquest of Jaunpur, Jamal Khan, the *Subedar* of that province, granted the father of Sher Shah, an Afghan adventurer named Hasan Khan, the pargana of Sasaram in Bihar as a *jagir*. Even at this date the Muslim rulers did not appear to have held Bihar with a firm hand and, so far as can be gathered, it was subjugated rather in name than in fact. The allegiance of the populace was rather loose, the zamindars were practically independent and refused to pay revenue, which compelled Sher Shah to resort to strong coercive measures

to subjugate them. When Hasan Khan died, Sher Khan took possession of his *jagir* on the strength of a royal *farman.* A little later he entered the service of Bahar Khan Lohani, the independent ruler of Bihar. Some time later he rose to be the deputy of his master and, still later, the real head of the government. Soon afterwards he came into possession of the strong fortress of Chunar. Here he was besieged by Humayun in 1531, although he had deliberately kept aloof from the Afghan rising of that year. Sher Khan saved himself by timely submission and Humayun left for Agra. But the overthrow of the older Afghan chiefs left Sher Khan supreme master of Bihar, and enabled him to subjugate Gwalior, Malwa, Ranthambore and Jodhpur. In a reign of five years he consolidated an elaborate system of administration, with a pyramid of officials conducting the business of government at all levels. The caravanserais, the wells which still stand, the course of the Grand Trunk Road from Bengal to the Punjab, are all his doings and the very trees which shade the weary traveller in the long marching, if not of his planting, stand in the places of those which he watered with care.

Bihar under the Great Mughals

Sher Shah Suri, the Afghan ruler had made Bihar the nerve-centre of north Indian politics and transferred, in 1541, the capital of Bihar from Bihar Sharif to Patna, where he built an exceptionally strong fort at a cost of half a million rupees. "If a fort were built in this place," he is said to have remarked, "the water of the Ganga could never flow far from it and Patna would come one of the great towns of the country." It was Sher Shah more than anybody else who founded the modern city of Patna, which again became the capital of an independent state.

Bihar was eventually annexed to the Mughal empire, but many years elapsed before Akbar's rule was firmly

established. Separate Governors were appointed for Bihar and Bengal while Orissa was sometimes attached to Bengal and at other times was placed under a separate Governor. The Governorship of Bihar was usually the stepping-stone to the more responsible and more lucrative vice-royalty of Bengal. The headquarters of the Bihar Governor was at Patna, which had become the entrepot of a large trade extending as far as Tibet, China, Persia and even Europe.

Surajgarh, Munger, Bhagalpur and Kahalgaon were captured by Raja Todarmal and Munim Khan, the newly appointed Governor of Bihar, both of whom compelled the Hindu Rajas of Kharagpur and Gidhaur to pay tribute to the Mughal emperor. The Mughal army encountered great difficulty, however, in suppressing the revolt of the Rohtas and Bhojpur chieftains who were in a constant state of rebellion. The Rajas of Jagdishpur resisted the Mughal armies for years until the unequal combat led to their entire destruction. Another chieftain, the Raja of Bhojpur, also defied the Emperor, till he too was defeated and imprisoned. When Akbar at length set him at liberty on the payment of an enormous ransom, he again armed and continued in rebellion during the reign of Jahangir. This rising was not finally quelled till, Bhojpur having been sacked, his successor, Raja Pratap, was executed by Shah Jahan.

Bihar in the Seventeenth Century

In 1621, Prince Parvez was appointed Governor of Bihar, and henceforth none but a royal prince could become the *Subedar* of this important province till the death of Aurangzeb. In 1624, when Shah Jahan revolted against his father and conquered Bengal and Bihar, he compelled the representatives of Parvez to surrender Patna. Bihar enjoyed peace and prosperity during the reigns of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb, particularly under the reign of the

latter, who made his grandson Azim-ush-shan the Governor. Azim's dream was to make the city of Azimabad, as he called it after himself, a second Delhi. He did succeed, for we learn from the contemporary accounts of foreign travellers that, from the point of view of trade, Patna was the second city in the Mughal empire. It was, according to Tavernier, the most famous mart in Northern India in the middle of the seventeenth century, a mart which attracted merchants from several overseas countries, such as England, Portugal and Poland. Saltpetre was brought down in flotillas of country boats from Patna to Bengal and whole shiploads taken overseas by the English and Dutch. In 1704, Murshid Ali Khan made a new capital at Murshidabad, which was apparently selected on account of its central position. Shortly afterwards he became Nawab Nazim of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, which were thus united under one authority.

The End of Mughal Domination

In the general disintegration of the Mughal empire which followed the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, the Nawabs became more and more independent, and "paid little obedience and less revenue to Delhi". The Nawab of Bengal, who ruled Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, appointed governors for Bihar between 1707 and 1733.[27] After the dismissal of Fakhr-ud-dowla, the last independent Governor of Bihar, the province came to be ruled by the Nawab of Bengal, and Bihar was annexed to the *suba* of Bengal. For about 200 years from 1733, it remained an appendage of Bengal.

In 1740, the third Nawab of Murshid Kuli Khan's line was overthrown by Ali Vardi Khan, an Afghan adventurer, who had been appointed Deputy Governor of Bihar. His rule lasted for sixteen troubled years and is a dismal record of wars, revolts and massacres, the land being perpetually harassed by the invasions of the Marathas and the

rebellions of Ali Vardi Khan's own relatives and generals. The Marathas were at last bought off by the cession of Orissa and the annual payment of twelve lakhs of rupees.

Ali Vardi Khan appointed his nephew, Zairuddin Ahmad, as the next Deputy Governor of Bihar. This young man of great ability completely subjugated the unruly zamindars of the land but was assassinated by the Afghans on 13 January 1748. This assassination was a rude blow to Ali Vardi, who soon defeated the Afghans in the battle of Rani Sarai, and subsequently Patna came under his control.

The period between 1757 and 1765 witnessed the growth and expansion of the British influence in Bengal. Siraj-ud-daula had succeeded his grandfather, Ali Vardi, and within three months had attacked the English and driven them out of their settlements, the capture of Calcutta culminating in what was from the English point of view 'the tragedy of the Black Hole'. Calcutta was recaptured by Clive and Admiral Watson, and Mir Jafar was installed in Siraj-ud-daula's place. Mir Jafar, though amenable to the point of obsequiousness, soon proved inefficient. He was, therefore, deposed and Mir Kasim Ali setup in his place.

Mir Kasim, who made his headquarters at Monghyr, was not content to be merely a puppet Nawab. His efforts to enforce the authority which properly belonged to his office brought him into conflict with the English.

The Chotanagpur Plateau

The Chotanagpur Plateau, known in early history as Jharkhand or 'the forest tract', had at some unknown time come under the sway of the Nagbansi Rajas, but it appears never to have been completely subjugated by the Mohammedans. In fact, there is no authentic record of any invasion of the country till Akbar's reign, when it was

overrun by his general, and the Raja of Kokrah, or Chotanagpur proper, became a tributary of the Mughal government (1585). When, in 1616, the Kokrah chief fell into arrears of tribute, Ibrahim Khan, Jahangir's Governor of Bihar, invaded his country—then celebrated for the diamonds found in the Sankh river—and the Raja was captured and removed to Gwalior. It appears that though the Rajas were reduced to the condition of tributaries by the Mughal viceroys of Bengal, they were little interfered with so long as their tributes were paid regularly in the shape of a few diamonds from the Sankh. Even so late as the reign of Aurangzeb, the allegiance of the chiefs of this tract must have been very loose, as the Jharkhand route to Bengal was little used by the Mughal armies on account of the savage manners of the mountaineers. In 1765 Chotanagpur was ceded to the British as part of Bihar. They first came into contact with this tract in 1771, when they intervened in a dispute between the raja of Ramgarh and his relative Tej Singh, who was at the head of the local army. In 1780 Ramgarh and Kharakdih formed part of a British district named Ramgarh, administered by a civilian while a contingent of native infantry, known as the Ramgarh battalion was stationed at Hazaribagh, under the command of a European officer. This district was dismembered after the Kol insurrection of 1831-32 and parts of it were transferred to the surrounding districts.

To the west of Hazaribagh is the district of Palamu whose reliable history does not "apparently date back beyond 1603, when the Raksel Rajputs were ousted by the Cheros. Bhagwant Rai, their leader, took advantage of the local Raja's absence at a ceremony at Surguja and raised the standard of revolt. The Chero dynasty lasted for nearly 200 years, the most renowned ruler of the line being Medni Rai, surnamed 'the Just', who ruled from 1659 to 1672 and extended his kingdom to Gaya, Hazaribagh and Surguja. The Cheros built many forts in the Palamu district, the best known of which is the old fort of Palamu, the erection

of which is ascribed to Medni Rai. It was attacked by Shaista Khan in 1641, but the Cheros bought off the invaders. The same thing happened a couple of years later, but in 1660 Daud Khan captured it. In 1771 the Cheros came into conflict with the British who, led by Captain Camac, the Government Agent, defeated the troops of the ruling Raja. From this time Palamu was included in the British district of Ramgarh. By 1813, when Churaman Rai, the ruling Raja, had become insolvent, Palamu was sold for arrears of revenue and bought in by the government for the amount due. Three years later old disturbances between the Kharwars and Cheros broke out, as a result of which Palamu was given to the Deo family in Gaya. This was the reward the family received for its services in helping to quell them.

In 1832 the Kharwars and Cheros again rose in rebellion, but the rising was soon put down. When the mutiny of 1857 broke out, the Kharwars rose against their Rajput landlords, and the mutineers of the Ramgarh battalion, taking refuge in Palamu, made common cause with two rebel landlords, Nilambar and Pitambar Singh. The insurgents were overthrown at the Palamu forts and the two landlords hanged.

Manbhum

Till Mohammedan times, Manbhum was regarded as part of the Jharkhand, the name given in the *Akbarnama* to the whole region from Birbhum and Panchet to Ratanpur in Madhya Pradesh and from Rohtasgarh in south Bihar to the frontier of Orissa. The early history of this district is still shrouded in mystery, but we know from *Badshahnama* that the Zamindar of Panchet was a commander of horse under Shah Jahan. The territory was acquired by the British with the grant of the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in 1765. In 1832, Ganga Narayan, a claimant to the Barabhum estate in the district, rose in rebellion, but was driven to Singhbhum, where he died.

Singhbhum

In early times, when Magadha was rising to power, the greater part of Singhbhum was a part of the Jharkhand forest tracts. The first indication of civilization in Singhbhum is afforded by a strange find of gold coins made many years ago near Bamanghati in Mayurbhanj, near the southern boundary of Singhbhum. These coins, among which were several coins of the Roman emperors, Constantine, Gordian etc., were beautifully preserved, and it is believed that the site of the find was on a trade route from Tarnluk, the ancient sea-port of Tamralipta, towards the north. At Benusagar, on the extreme southern border, there are remains of ancient temples, dating from the ninth and tenth centuries A.D. Ancient copper-plate inscriptions show that there were rulers of Mayurbhanj in the twelfth century A.D. and that in those early days copper was smelted in many parts of this district. In 1868, Professor Ball found ancient excavations in every conceivable situation, at the top of hills, in valleys, in the deepest forests, and even in the middle of cultivation, where the rocks are obscured by superficial deposits. It appears from these excavations that the miners, who possessed considerable mining skill, had carefully searched the country and were no common practical metallurgists. The mines, Professor Ball found, were attributed to a people called Seraks, who once occupied the country. The terms 'Sarawak', 'Serak' and 'Sarak' are clearly, a corruption, of *Sravaka,* the Sanskrit word for a 'hearer' or a Jain lay brother, i.e., a Jain engaged in secular pursuits. As the Jain temples in Manbhum are said to date back to fourteenth or fifteenth century A.D. one can infer that it was during that period that the Jains had penetrated to Singhbhum.

Thanks mainly to its isolated position, Singhbhum was never invaded by the Mughals or the Marathas. When the Hos entered Singhbhum, they not only easily overcame the Bhuiyas inhabiting the forest country at that time but

also maintained their independence against all other intruders. In the latter half of the 18th century, for instance, they fought several successful wars against the Rajas of Chotanagpur and Mayurbhanj who wanted to subjugate them.

Singhbhum's relations with the British date from 1767, when the Raja made overtures to the Resident at Midnapore asking for protection, though it was not until 1820 that he acknowledged himself a feudatory of the British Government. The restless Hos broke the agreement soon and took part in the rebellion of 1831-33, a fierce uprising of the Hos and Mundas which compelled the British to recognize the necessity of a thorough subjugation of the Hos. While a strong force of regular troops quelled the rising, another, under Colonel Richards, entered Singhbhum in November 1836, and within three months all the refractory headmen had submitted. There was no further trouble in this region until 1857 when the Porahat Raja rose in rebellion and a considerable section of the Hos joined him. A difficult campaign ensued, but eventually the estate of Porahat was confiscated (1859), putting an end to the disturbances.

The Santhal Parganas

Even before the Santhal Paraganas became a district in 1855, parts of this region played an important part in Indian history. While it once had, in Rajmahal, the capital of Bengal, it still has, at Deoghar, one of the most sacred places of pilgrimage for Hindus in India.

The earliest inhabitants of the district, the Pahariyas ('hillmen'), who inhabited the Rajmahal Hills, had for centuries followed the profession of brigandage and raids. The Muslim rulers had attempted to confine them within a ring fence by granting zamindaris and *jagirs* for the maintenance of a local police to repel incursions into the plains. Little control was, however, exercised, and in the

political unrest of the middle of the eighteenth century these defensive arrangements had broken down. Repressive measures were no doubt at first attempted with little success. It was, therefore, decided to try methods of pacification, and to Augustus Cleveland, the then collector of the district of Bhagalpur and Rajmahal, goes most of the credit of the successful completion of this task (1779-84). He allotted stipends to the Pahariya headmen, raised a Corps of Hill Rangers recruited from among the Pahariyas, and organized special tribunals with tribal chiefs as their presidents.

The European Factory at Patna

Though the English had made their way into Bihar immediately after their settlement in Bengal (1650), their factory was first officially recognized in 1658.[28] The Dutch had settled here a few years earlier. In 1664, Job Charnock, famous in history as the founder of Calcutta, was here as a factor. He is said to have rescued a *sati* from a funeral pyre at Patna and then married her in 1678 or 1679. The incident, described rather romantically in a set of verses attributed to Sir A.C. Lyall, was intended to form the epitaph of the pilot of the Ganga, Joseph (or more properly Joshiah) Townshend:

> Shoulder to shoulder, Joe, my boy, into
> the crowd like the wedge,
> Out with the hunger, messmates, but do
> not strike with the edge.
> Cries Charnock, 'Scatter faggots ! Double
> that Brahmin in two;
> That pale widow is mine, Joe, the little
> brown girl is for you.[29]

In 1757, Clive came to Patna, along with Mir Jafar, after the battle of Plassey and appointed Miran as the nominal Governor of Patna, though the administration was

really carried on by Raja Ram Narayan. The Governors of Allahabad and Oudh put forward, soon afterwards, Prince Ali Gauhar as the ruler of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Ali Gauhar now assumed the title of Shah Alam and besieged Patna in 1760, but was forced by Captain Knox to flee. In 1763, Mir Kasim ordered the massacre of about 60 Englishmen at Patna and had their bodies thrown into a well in the compound of the house in which they were confined. This massacre was followed by an active campaign in which the English were everywhere successful. Finally in August 1765, after the decisive battle of Buxar, the Diwani of Bihar, Bengal and Orissa was made over to the East India Company. An English resident was appointed at Patna, but the administration of Bihar, which then comprised only Patna and Gaya districts—Patna city itself being a separate charge— remained in the hands of the titular Emperor, Shah Alam. From this date Bihar (along with Bengal) became a joint province of British India. In 1769 English supervisors were appointed, and in 1770 a Council for Bihar was established at Patna. In 1774 the supervisors, who had meanwhile been designated collectors, and the Council for Bihar were abolished, and Provincial Council was established at Patna. This continued till 1781, when Bihar was made a district under a Collector and Judge Magistrate. In 1865 it was divided into Patna and Gaya districts, the Bihar sub-division being included in the former, and nineteen estates were transferred from Patna to Tirhut in 1869. With effect from 1 April 1912, Bihar, Chotanagpur and Orissa were placed under a Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council and the new Province of Bihar and Orissa was born with its capital at Patna.

Bihar and the National Liberation Movement, 1857

The British could not secure a foothold in Bihar without meeting with determined opposition from the established government. Siraj-ud-daula, we saw, did not

succumb without a contest which became unequal owing to the treacherous defection of his trusted relation and commander, Mir Jafar. The fight at Plassey was foredoomed to failure owing to the intrigues at Murshidabad and some powerful sections defecting to the British. The story of Mir Kasim's revolt against his guardian-protectors well known. Unable to witness the ruin of his state without protest, he had taken up arms against the East India Company, and in his struggle against the British he had sought the help of the fugitive Emperor Shah Alam and the ruler of Oudh. The disaster at Buxar saw the dissolution of the confederacy and the grant of Diwani by the emperor to the East India Company. But it also demonstrated that "Bihar was not prepared to accept all at once the verdict of the battle of Plassey". Here the zamindars were ready to challenge the British power.[30]

Thus, in Bengal and Bihar, the establishment of the alien without an opposition in which many chiefs and in India had effectively participated. The struggle, thought limited, had assumed the character of a war against the foreigner who was encroaching on the freedom of the land.

More positive evidence of resistance to British domination is provided by the rising of the sepoys stationed at Danapur, the military station attached to Patna. Three regiments of these sepoys, numbering about 2000, and four times as many armed villagers under Kunwar Singh, marched during the end of 1857, on Arrah. They reached the town on the 27th of that month, and forthwith released all the prisoners in the jail and plundered the treasury. A body of European and Sikh soldiers, sent from Danapur for their rescue, had to own defeat. Vincent Eyre, then on his way in a steamer to Allahabad, heard of it and marched towards Arrah. After a serious engagement with Kunwar Singh's forces at Bibiganj, on 2 August 1857, he reached Arrah and relieved the besieged garrison. He disarmed the people of Arrah and executed those whom he considered to

be the enemies of the English. He then marched towards Jagdishpur, Kunwar Singh's native place, and captured it, levelling to the ground all the principal buildings within Kunwar Singh's premises. Instead, however, of making immediate attempts to retrieve his lost position in Bihar, Kunwar Singh continued to harass the English troops wherever he went. With an arm lost and his thigh wounded, he recrossed the Ganga on 21 April 1858 and proceeded to Jagdishpur. Here Captain Le Grand, the commander of the British army sent against Kunwar Singh, suffered a severe repulse. But the victor was not destined to live long. Worn out with fatigue and incessant fighting, he died on 26 April 1858, leaving his followers to maintain the tradition of gallant fighting under the determined leadership of his brother Amar Singh. Pressed heavily from two sides and then driven into the Rohtas Hills, the followers of Amar Singh were suddenly attacked by the English under Douglas, while they were resting round their camp-fire. Many of them were thus shot dead in the struggle that ensued. This marked the termination of the first phase of India's attempt at liberation from the British yoke. In other parts of Bihar, too, such as Bhagalpur, Rohini, Purnia and Chotanagpur, the movement was suppressed by the British at about the same time.

Revolutionary Nationalism and Bihar

Bihar continued to play its historic role in India's struggle of freedom and home rule. Even before the advent of Gandhi, the architect of India's independence, in Champaran, there was an almost spontaneous outburst of revolutionary zeal in 1908 when there was a bomb explosion at Muzaffarpur. The bomb, apparently meant for Kingsford, the thoroughly unpopular District Magistrate of Bengal, unluckily hit two European ladies who were the wife and daughter of one Kennedy, a leading legal practitioner of Muzaffarpur. Both Khudi Ram Bose and

Prafulla Chaki, involved in the incident, lost their lives. While one was hanged, the other shot himself when about to be captured.

The influence of the Home Rule Movement on Bihar was seen when in December 1916, a Home Rule League was started at Patna with Mazharul Haque as its president. It was in connection with the activities of the League that Mrs Annie Besant visited Bihar in 1918.

In December 1929, the Bihar Provincial Congress adopted its eventful resolution for the country's independence and in 1930 led the state to play a very prominent part in India's struggle for freedom, known as the Civil Disobedience Movement, in which, in spite of great provocation, the province as a whole remined non-violent to a remarkable extent.

Mahatma Gandhi in Champaran

The early decades of the present century witnessed yet another conflict in Bihar, but this time it was altogether of a different nature. The conflict arose due to the agrarian discontent with which Champaran in Bihar had been seething for some time. The relations between the European indigo factory owners and Indian cultivators received additional acerbity from the racial factor. Gandhi was present at the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress in December 1916, when the Champaran troubles came up for discussion. Although Gandhi was invited to participate in it, he declined, saying that he knew nothing about the matter. Raj Kumar Shukla, a Bihar peasant, approached Gandhi and requested him to visit the district and see things for himself. On an appointed day he accompanied Raj Kumar to Patna and from their proceeded to Muzaffarpur. There he tried to contact the Secretary of the Planters' Association and the Commissioner of the Tirhut Division, but was told that as an outsider he had no business to come between the planters and their tenants.

Undaunted by this, Gandhi proceeded towards Champaran. While he was on his way, he was served with a notice to quit the district by the next available train as his presence was considered a danger to public peace. Gandhi refused to comply. The Commissioner of Tirhut Division ordered Gandhi's arrest without consulting his superiors, but the orders were cancelled by the Government of India.

Thus Gandhi's first act of civil disobedience in India triumphed. He was left at liberty to pursue his investigations into the peasants grievances. The planters felt perturbed at Gandhi's presence in Champaran and the Government at the possibilities of a Satyagraha struggle developing in the indigo districts of Bihar. The Champaran Agrarian Committee was, therefore, appointed at the instance of the Government of India and Gandhi was offered a seat on it.[31]

'The Satyagraha in Champaran," observes J.P. Suda, "is an event of great significance in the history of our national movement. It shows how fearless adherence to truth and the readiness to brave suffering and go to jail for a just cause which constitute the essence of Satyagraha can infuse a new spirit into the minds of the poor people and enable them to become fearless and fight for their rights."[32]

The Outbreak of 1942

The news of the arrest of Mahatma Gandhi and other Congress leaders was, as we know, followed by non-violent popular demonstrations almost everywhere in the country. In Bihar, attempts were made even in remote villages to paralyse the Government machinery. Hundreds of people were shot and killed while they were engaged in sabotaging means of communications and gaining control over government buildings. In Patna the situation worsened on 11 August 1942, when a huge procession of students, in spite of severe lathi charges, was able to hoist the national

flag on the eastern gate of the Patna Secretariat. The army stationed there fired 13 or 14 rounds, causing the death of seven students and injuries to several. A huge procession at Muzaffarpur disarmed the constables and officers at Katra Police Station. The people proclaimed the establishment of a National Government in north Bhagalpur. Under the guidance of the indomitable revolutionary, Siaram Singh, the Congress workers set up a parallel administration at Sultanpur and appointed their own police officer. Several persons succumbed to bullet injuries at Rupauli when a police inspector fired indiscriminately on a mob of 12,000 through the barred windows of a specially constructed quarter of iron frame with asbestos roof. The attack on the Bikram Police Station was led by such brave men as Ranganath Singh of Gorakhari who courted martyrdom while hoisting the national flag there.

In Santhal Parganas, the movement was widespread and intense in Deoghar, Sarwan and Pahapur. Ranchi in Chotanagpur, and Dalbhum and Jamshedpur in Singhbhum were some of the other storm centres of the movement. Some of the revolutionaries, including Jayaprakash Naryan, Kartik Prasad, Braj Kishore Prasad Singh, Shri Krishna Sinha, Anugraha Narain Sinha, Dr. Baidyanath Jha and Shyam Sunder Prasad took shelter in Nepal Tarai, and set up a centre for the training of *Azad Dastas,* Sardar Nityanand Singh being the chief instructor.[33]

The Quit India Movement was ruthlessly crushed by the British Government, but it eventually led the country to complete independence. Bihar also played a significant role in framing the Constitution of India. It was allotted 31 general seats and five Muslim seats in the proposed Constituent Assembly. Dr. Sachchidanand Sinha, the oldest member of the Constituent Assembly, was called upon to act as temporary Chairman. On 11 December 1946,

Dr. Rajendra Prasad was elected as the permanent Chairman and on 25 January 1950, as the first President of the Indian Republic, certainly a great honour bestowed on Bihar.

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2. Census of India, 1981.
3. R.C. Prasad, *Political Transition in Bihar* (Magadh University: Survey Research Unit, N.D.) p. 107.
4. Ibid.
5. The level of literacy in India is 46.74 per cent for males and 24.88 per cent females (1981 Census).
6. Myron Weirier (ed.), *State Politics In India* (Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 111.
7. According to the 1981 Census, the tribal population of Bihar constitutes 11.3 per cent of the total tribal population of India.
8. D.N. Majumdar, Races and Cultures of India, Bombay, 1961, p. 122.
9. The percentage of agricultural labourers to total workers in 1981 was 35.4; that of cultivators 43.8. The districts of Santhal Parganas and Ranchi have the highest proportion of cultivators (20 per cent in each) in their population.
10. A.L. Basham, Foreword to M. S. Pandey's *The Historical Geography and Topography of Bihar* (1963).
11. *Vrijian* in Sanskrit. In Pali the word 'Vrigi' becomes 'Vajji'.
12.. Ajatashatru had turned his attention to the rich lands north of the Ganga, and had carried his victorious arms to the very foot of the holy Himalayas. In the course of this war he built a watch-fort at a village called Patali, on the banks of the Ganga, where in later years he founded a city which, under the name of Pataliputra (Palibothra of Greek writers), became eventually the capital, not only of Magadha, but also of India—India, that is, as it was known in those early days. According to another tradition, Udaya, the son of Ajatashatru, laid the foundations

of the city of Kusumapura or Pataliputra at the confluence of the Son and the Ganga. A fort had already been built on the site by his father.

13. *Footfalls of Indian History,* London, 1915, p. 53.
14. Radha Kumud Mookerji, *Chandragupta Maurya and His Times,* Delhi, 1960, p. 18.
15. Romila Thapar, *Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas,* Oxford, 1961, p. 214.
16. Ibid, p. 33.
17. *Vide A History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon,* Oxford, 1930, p. 15.
18. I.W. Mobbett, A *Short History of India,* North Melbourne, 1968, p. 59.
19. Sir George Dunbar, *India and the Passing of Empire,* London, 1951, p. 9.
20. *Facts and Figures about Bihar,* Patna, 1958, p. 8.
21. *The Imperial Gazetteer of India: The Indian Empire,* Oxford, 1928, Vol. II, p. 9.
22. Regarding the origin of the city, Hiuen-Tsang relates an interesting story found also in the *Kathasaritasagara.* The city, he was told, owed its origin to a prince Putraka, who created it with a stroke of his magic staff and named it in honour of his wife the princess Patali. Diodorus attributes the foundation of the city to Heracles, by whom perhaps he may mean Balaram, the brother of Krishna. According to the *Vaya Parana* and the Sutapitaka, Kusumapura or Pataliputra was founded by the Sisunaga King Udaya, the ruler of Magadha, towards the end of the fifth century B.C. The Buddhist accounts, however, trace its origin to the reign of Udaya's grandfather, Ajatashatru. When Buddha was crossing the Ganga on his last journey from Rajagriha to Vaishali, he saw the two ministers of Ajatashatru engaged in building a fort at the village of Patali as a check upon the ravages of the people of Vajji, and he predicted that the fort would became a great city. The Nandas who succeeded Sisunagas removed the capital of Magadha to Pataliputra from Rajagriha, modern Rajgir. Under Chandragupta, the Greek Sandrokottos, Pataliputra (the Palibothra of the Greeks and the Kusumapura of the early Gupta emperors) became the

capital of Northern India. *Vide Imperial Gazetteer of India: Provincial Series.* Bengal (Calcutta, 1909), Vol. II, pp. 22 et seq.

23. Quoted by Radhakamal Mukherjee, *The Culture and Art of India,* London, 1959, pp. 184 et seq.

24. Dharmasvamin, the Tibetan monk pilgrim who was in Bihar in A.D. 1234, does not confirm the general impression that "Nalanda was completely destroyed by the beginning of the 13th century". He does, however, make it clear that though "Nalanda was still in existence", it was but "a mere ghost of its past glory. Once it had seven temples and 14 big and 84 small monasteries. Dharmasvamin tells us that they were damaged by the Muslims and there was none to look after them or to make offerings." Dr. G. Roerich, *Biography of Dharmasvamin,* Patna, 1959, pp. xix et seq.

25. Radhakamal Mukerjee, op.cit., p. 203.

26. Dr G. Roerich, op.cit.

27. Shree Govind Misra, *History of Bihar (1740-1772),* New Delhi, 1970, p. X.

28. N.N. Raye, *The Annals of the Early English Settlement in Bihar,* Calcutta 1927, p. 50.

29. Ibid., p. 78.

30. Shree Govind Misra, *op. cit.*

31. B.R. Nanda, *Mahatma Gandhi,* New York, 1965, p. 102.

32. *Indian National Movement,* Meerut, 1969, p. 178.

33. B.C. Majumdar (ed.), *Struggle for Freedom,* Bombay, 1969, pp. 661-63.

2

The Provincial Government Under the Act of 1919

The creation of Bihar and Orissa as a separate province in 1912 marked a new chapter in the history of provincial Government. The declaration announcing the creation of the province provided for an Executive Council with a Lieutenant Governor for the province.[1] Sir Charles Stuart Bayley assumed the charge at Calcutta on 1st April, 1912 as the first Lieutenant Governor of the newly created province. The Lieutenant Governor was appointed for five years with the approval of the King Emperor.[2] The Executive Council, consisting of three members, was appointed to look after the administration of the province. This system reduced the work and responsibility of the Lieutenant Governor who now carried on business in consultation with the members of the Executive Council.[3] A new Legislative Council was also established for the province. This council consisted of about 43 members. They were put in three categories namely, members of the Executive Council as ex-officio members, nominated members and elected members. This was constituted under the Indian Council Act of 1909 as amended by Government of India Act, 1912. It consisted of the following members.[4]

(1)	The members of the Executive Council: Ex-Officio	3 Members
(2)	Elected Members:	
	(i) By Municipal Commissioners	5 Members
	(ii) By District Boards	5 Members
	(iii) By Landlords	5 Members
	(iv) By Mohammedan Community	4 Members
	(v) By the Mining Community	1 Member
	(vi) By the Planting Community	1 Member
(3)	Members nominated by the Lieutenant Governor with the sanction of Governor General was not to exceed 19 in number and not more than 15 were to be officials.	19 Members
	Total:	43 Members

In addition, the Lieutenant Governor was empowered with the sanction of the Governor General to nominate one person, official or non-official, having expert knowledge of proposed or pending legislation, to be a member of the Council. The term of office for an additional member was fixed at three years.[5]

Very little change occurred in the composition of the Legislative Council before 1919.[6]

Five meetings of Legislative Council were held during the year 1918-19. The Bihar and Orissa Irrigation Bill, 1918, the Bihar and Orissa Primary Education Bill, 1918, the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Rules Amendment Bill, 1918, and the Bihar and Orissa Food Adulteration Bill, 1918 were passed into law.[7] Eight meetings of the

Legislative Council were held during the year 1919-20. The six bills were introduced and passed into Act. They were (1) The Jharia Water Supply (Amendment) Act, 1919; (2) The Bihar and Orissa Municipal Survey Act, 1920; (3) The Bihar and Orissa Places of Pilgrimage Act, 1920; (4) The Bihar and Orissa Municipal (Sanitary Officers) Act, 1920; (5) The Chotanagpur Tenancy (Amendment) Act, 1920; and (6) The Bihar and Orissa Mining Settlement Act, 1920.[8]

In March, 1920 the term of office of the additional members of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council was extended upto the date of formation of the reformed council.[9]

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT UNDER THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1919

The new Constitution was a fluid and transitional constitution forming a conscious link between a bureaucratic past and a democratic future. It marked a period of political education which could only be achieved through gradual but expanding exercise of responsibility.[10] It represented a peaceful revolution as a result of which an executive responsible not directly to the people but to the Government of foreign nation, had voluntarily transferred the major part of its responsibilities for certain important functions of Government to ministers responsible to popularly elected council while it had reserved not only a complete responsibility for certain other functions, but also a modified responsibility even for those transferred to the ministers. This coordination of two different principles of Government formed the essential feature of the new constitution both in legislative and in the executive. The Governor represented in his own person the principle of coordination and the sanction which united the two elements into the single body politic. If the council was dissolved, the ministers were to seek re-election and if they

were defeated they were either to secure another seat or vacate their office. They could not in any case continue as ministers unless they possessed the confidence of the majority of the new council. The Governor-in-council was responsible directly to the Governor-General and the Crown.[11]

These two arms of the Executive body had separate functions. The Governor-in-council was responsible for what were called "Reserved" subjects broadly for law and order, for the administration of justice, of police and prisons and for the whole land revenue system. The ministers were responsible for the functions of the administration which had been described as "nation building activities of Government". These were, in brief, education, public health, medical relief, industries, agriculture, Local Self Government and Excise.[12]

The councils were, for the first time, given the right of removing ministers by passing directly a vote of no-confidence or vote of censure against them. Legislative Councils were not given the power to dismiss undesirable councillors. This power was specially denied to them because of the system of diarchy which was introduced in the province.[13]

The provincial Government of Bihar was organised under the Act of 1919. This Act introduced a dual form of Government in the provincial sphere. This dualism was meant to meet in some measure the popular demand for self-government. Under the Act the safe subjects were classified as "Transferred" and those which could not be submitted to popular control were "Reserved" subjects. An act made by the Governor in the exercise of these powers was to be laid before each House of Parliament and had to be presented for His Majesty's assent, where assent was required. The Governor could reserve for the assent of the Governor-General certain bills which affected the range of

transferred subject. Among such subjects were the construction of Light Railway and certain provisions relating to the land revenue of the province. A bill so reserved could become law on receiving the assent of the Governor-General within six months from the date of reservation when the Governor himself assented to the bill.[14]

THE PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE

Bihar was governed in relation to reserved subjects, by a Governor-in-council, and in relation to transferred subjects by the Governor acting with ministers appointed under this Act.[15]

The members of Governor's Executive Council were to be appointed by His Majesty by warrant under the Royal Sign Manual, and was of such number as not exceeding four, as the Secretary of State in Council directed. At least one of them must be a person who at the time of his appointment had been for at least 12 years in the service of the Crown in India.[16] The names for appointment to the Executive Council were recommended by the Governor.

Business of Governor-in-Council and Governor with Ministers: According to the Act of 1919, all orders and other proceedings of the Government of a Governor's province were to be made by the Government of the province, and were to be authenticated as the Governor might direct by rule for distinguishing orders and other proceedings relating to transferred subjects from other orders and proceedings. These were not to be called into question in any legal proceedings. The Governor might make rules and orders for the more convenient transanction of business in his Executive Council and with his ministers. The Governor might also make rules and orders for regulating the relations between his Executive Council and his

Ministers for the purpose of transanction of the business of the local Government.[17]

All the Executive Councillors were appointed by the Crown on the advice of the Secretary of State, for a period of five years and they held office at his pleasure. The Governor and Council were jointly responsible to the Government of India and the Secretary of State and ultimately to Parliament.[18]

Members of the Executive Council of Bihar and Orissa were the following during the period 1921-36 :

His Excellency the Hon'ble Satyendra Prasanna Baron Sinha of Raipur, P.C., K.C.S.I., K.C., (30th December, 1920 to 29th November, 1921).

His Excellency the Hon'ble Sir Havilland Le Mesurier, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., I.C.S. (29th November, 1921 to 11th April, 1922).

The Hon'ble Mr. Hugh Mc. Pherson, Sri Sachchidananda Sinha (1921-25).

His Excellency Sir Henry Wheeler, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., I.C.S., (1922-27).

The Hon'ble Mr. Egbert Lawrie Lucas Hammond, (1926-27).

Maharaja Bahadur Keshava Prasad Singh, C.B.E., (1926-28).

His Excellency Sir Hugh Landsdown Stephenson, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., I.C.S., (1927-31).

The Hon'ble Mr. James David Sifton, C.I.E., I.C.S., (1927-31).

The Hon'ble Raja Rajendra Narayan Bhanja Deo, C.B.E., (1928-32).

The Hon'ble Mr. John Tarlton Whitty, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., (1931-35).

His Excellency Sir James David Sifton, (1932-36).

Babu Nirsu Narayan Sinha (1933-36).

The Hon'ble Mr. John Austen Hubback, C.S.I., I.C.S., The Hon'ble Mr. P.C. Tallents, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., (1935-36).[19]

Thus frequent changes used to occur in the membership of the Executive Council from time to time.

The Governor of the province was given power to appoint a member of his Executive Council to be a Vice-President of the Council.[20]

Procedure in case of difference of opinion in Executive Council

The act provided that if any difference of opinion arose on any question brought before a meeting of a Governor's Executive Council, the Governor-in-Council was to be bound by the opinion of the decision of the majority of those present. If they were equally divided the Governor or other person presiding had a second or casting vote. If a Governor was obliged to be absent himself from any meeting of his Executive Council, by indisposition or any other cause, the Vice-President, or if he was absent, the senior member present at the meeting presided with like powers as the Governor would have if present.[21]

Appointment of Ministers and Council Secretaries

The Act of 1919 further declared that the Governor of a Governor's province might, by notification, appoint ministers not being members of his Executive Council or other official, to administer transferred subjects and any minister so appointed would hold office during his pleasure. No minister would hold office for a period longer than six months, unless he became an elected member of the local legislature.[22] There was no provision requiring the Governor to appoint as ministers only those who could

command a majority in the legislature or only from the majority party and this was done because there was no intention that the ministers were to form themselves into a cabinet of the English type. Each minister was individually responsible for the portfolio assigned to him, and had nothing to do with other ministers and still less with the reserved departments. The Governor was neither bound to accept the advice of councillors nor that of ministers. His supremacy in provincial matters was left, as before, unlimited and unrestricted. The ministers had no hand in finance. The result was that the ministers and their projects were always at the mercy of the Governor.[23]

The Governor of the Province could at his discretion appoint from among the non-official members of the local legislature, council-secretaries, who held office during his pleasure.[24]

MINISTERS

The following ministers were appointed during the period 1921-36 :

Ministry of Education: Khan Bahadur Saiyid Mohammad Fakhruddin was appointed Minister of Education in 1921. He continued in his office till May, 1933. He resigned the office of Minister in charge of the portfolio of education on 6th May, 1933 on account of ill health and to the universal regret of all who knew him. He died shortly afterwards. The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyid Muhammad Hussain was appointed in his place. After holding office for less than eight months, the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Saiyid Muhammad Hussain died suddenly of heart failure on 24th December, 1933. His death too was widely regretted. As a temporary measure some of the subjects included in the portfolio under his charge were taken over by His Excellency the Governor and some were transferred to the Hon'ble Sir Ganesh Dutta Singh. The vacancy was filled by the

appointment of the Hon'ble Mr. Saiyid Abdul Aziz on 15th January, 1934. He vacated office on the eve of the introduction of Provincial Autonomy in 1936.[25]

Minister of Local Self-Government: The Hon'ble Mr. Madhu Sudan Das, C.I.E., was appointed Minister of Local Self-Government in 1921.[26] He resigned from his post as Minister on 9th March, 1923.[27] To fillup this vacancy the Hon'ble Babu Ganesh Dutta Singh was appointed in 1923.[28] He vacated the office on the eve of the introduction of Provincial Autonomy in 1936-37.[29]

The ministers took part in the deliberations and discussions of the Legislative Council. They were obliged to reply to the questions put by the members. They presented demands for the grant of money for their departments during the budget session of the Legislative Council. They also had to face the vote of censor and vote of non-confidence. During the period under review the Minister of Local Self-Government, Ganesh Dutta Singh, had to face many critical moments because of the frequent supersessions of Municipalities and Local Boards by the Government. The non-official members took him to task for the rash and hasty acts of the Government. But since the Minister had the full backing and authority of the Government behind him he usually defended himself successfully.[30]

These ministers were not really free to handle the business of their departments because too much power was still concentrated in the hands of the Governor.

The Governor was not to be a member of the Legislative Council. He had the right of addressing the council.[31] The Governor might determine time and place for holding the sessions of his Legislative Council as he thought fit and might also by notification or otherwise prorogue the council.[32]

The year 1921 inaugurated two great events in the history of the province. On December 29, 1920 His Excellency the Right Hon'ble Satyendra Prasanna Baron Singh of Raipur, the first Indian Governor of an Indian Province under the British Crown, joined as the Governor of Bihar and Orissa. The same day marked the initiation of the new scheme of representative Government. The Governor declared it at the inauguration of Legislative Council Bihar and Orissa on February 7, 1921.

"I have said that the change in the constitution is not revolutionary. Continuity is the first necessity for the life of the State and change is essential to the health of all forms of the life of society. The problem in every field—whether politics, literature or religion—is the same, that of finding continuity in progress. The new system introduced the method of direct election by the people grouped under different territorial constituencies.[33]

He informed the council that, while under the old system the number of voters was only; 2, 404, under the Act of 1919 the number of voters increased to 3,25,293.

The voters were divided as follows:

(1)	Non-Mohammedan Rural Voters	2,53,044
(2)	Non-Mohammedan Urban Rural Voters	38,992
(3)	Mohammedan Rural Voters	24,919
(4)	Mohammedan Urban Voters	8,338
	Total	3,25,293

The following Governors served this province:

Sir Edward Gait had remained in charge of the province as Lieutenant Governor till 29th of December, 1920. Lord Sinha took charge from Sir Edward Gait.[34]

1. His Excellency the Right Hon'ble Satyendra Prasanna Baron Sinha of Raipur, P.C., K.C., S.I..K.C. (30th December, 1920 to 29th November, 1921).[35]

2. His Excellency the Hon'ble Sir Havilland Le Mesurier (acting) K.C.I.E., C.S.I., I.C.S. (29th November, 1921 to 11th April, 1922).[36]

3. His Excellency Sir Henry Wheeler, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., I.C.S., (12th April, 1922 to 5th April, 1927).

Towards the end of March, 1923 His Excellency Sir Henry Wheeler proceeded on leave to England for four months and the Hon'ble Sir Hugh Mc. Pherson, Vice-President of the Executive Council, acted as Governor of the Province from 27th March to 26th July, 1925.[37]

4. Sir Hugh Landsdown Stephenson, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., I.C.S., (7th April, 1927 to 6th April, 1932).

His Excellency Sir Hugh Landsdown Stephenson proceeded on leave for four months on 26th April, 1929 and during his absence the Hon'ble Mr. J.D. Sifton assumed charge as acting Governor. For the first two months of the year 1930, His Excellency Sir Hugh Landsdown Stephenson was the Governor of province, but in June he went to act for four months as Governor of Bengal. During his absence Sifton acted as Governor.[38]

5. Sir James David Sifton, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E. I.C.S. (7th April, 1932 to 9th March, 1937) former member and Vice-President of the Executive Council assumed charge of it on the forenoon of the same day 7th April, 1932 on return from leave.

In view of the importance of reconstruction work after the great earthquake of 15th January, 1934, His Excellency Sir James Sifton postponed his intention of taking four months' leave in the hot weather. His Excellency departed on leave on 12th October, 1934 making over charge of the Administration to the Hon'ble Mr. (now Sir) John Tarlton Whitty, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., member of the Executive Council, who was appointed as acting Governor till the return of Sir James Sifton from leave on 11th February, 1935. At the end of September,

1934 His Excellency Sir James Sifton, who had already in the preceding January, February and March made extensive tours of the earthquake-stricken districts, made a further tour to inspect the progress achieved in the work of reconstruction.[39]

These Governors till 1937 served the interest of the British Government and paid only lip service to the cause of the welfare of the people of the province.

The Governor of a province continued to be a most important person in the provincial Government. As the Agent of the British Crown and the Governor General of India, he was the real centre of power and authority. Under the Act of 1919 he was vested with so many special and discretionary powers that the Legislative Council and Ministers remained puppets under him. The position of the Minister was weak. The Governor had power to allocate the revenue and balances of the Province between reserved and transferred subjects. In case of disagreement between the Ministers and the officers of his department the Governor supported the officers against the Ministers. The Governor, through the Executive Council, controlled the finance of the department. The position of the Governor in the Province was that of constitutional dictator. The Governor had the sole authority to make laws relating to reserved subjects contrary to the decision of the Legislative Council. The Act of 1919, in fact, introduced an irresponsible autocracy and not a responsible Government.[40] The Legislative Council had solid block of nominated and official members to support the views and policy of the bureaucracy on questions relating to transferred subjects though a majority of the elected members might decide otherwise. The Governor had also unlimited powers regarding the appointment of the ministers. The Civil Service was under the Governor. The Governor could override the decision of a Minister relating to transferred subjects and direct him

to act otherwise. The Governor had also emergency powers. The Governor had also power to stop legislation, in respect of transferred subjects, notwithstanding the opinion of the legislative council.[41]

THE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE

With the introduction of responsible Government in the province the question of the reform of the Legislature assumed great importance. By the Act of 1919 it was to consist of the house known as the Legislative Council. In this council the majority of members were to be elected, the rest being nominated by the Governor to give representation to special interests and classes. This council consisted of the members of the Executive Council and of the members nominated or elected as provided under this Act.[42]

The Legislative Council would continue for three years from its first meeting.[43] It could be extended by the Governor by six months with the previous sanction of the Governor-General but under the Amendment of the Act of 1933 the life of the Council could be extended indefinitely by the Governor each time by one year.[44] Any meeting of the Legislative Council might be adjourned by the Presiding Officer. All questions in the Legislative Council were to be determined by a majority of votes of the members present other than the person presiding, who, however, had a casting vote in case of equality of votes.[45]

The President of the Council was for the first four years appointed by the Governor and hereafter was a member of the Council and approved by the Governor.[46]

The provincial legislature had only a limited power because it could not enforce its decisions with regard to reserved subjects. There were certain important heads of expenditure which were excluded from its jurisdiction.[47] The estimated annual expenditure and revenue of the

province was laid in the form of a statement before the Council in each year, and the proposals of the local government for the appropriation of provincial revenues and other money in any year was submitted to the vote of the Council in the form of demands for grants.[48] In matters of finance, the powers of the Council were equally circumscribed. The Budget was, no doubt, to be submitted to them and the council had the power of refusing assent or reducing any item. But the Governor had the power of restoring any grant refused or reduced by the Council.[49]

Governor might certify that the passage of a Bill was essential for the discharge of his responsibility for the reserved subjects, and thereupon the Bill, notwithstanding the fact that the Council had not consented thereto, was deemed to have been passed, and on signature by the Governor became an Act of the local legislature.[50]

LEGISLATIVE POWERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

The provincial Legislative Council had power under the Government of India Act, 1919 to make laws for the peace and good government of the province. It could repeal or amend in the province any law made by any authority in British India other than Local Legislature.[51]

The extent of the disability of the Council to deal with matters relating to the backward districts was regulated by the Backward tracts notification of the third of January, 1921.[52] Previous sanction of Governor-General-in-Council was required for legislation by the provincial council on certain subjects. The Legislative Council could not without the previous sanction of the Governor-General make or take into consideration any law:

(a) imposing or authorising imposition of any new tax, unless the tax was a tax scheduled as exempted under the scheduled taxes Rules

framed under Section 129A of the Government of India Act; or

(b) affecting the public debt of India, or the customs duties, or any other tax or duty, other than a tax scheduled as aforesaid for the time being in force and imposed by the authority of the Governor-General-in-Council for the general purpose of the Government of India; or

(c) affecting the discipline or maintenance of any part of His Majesty's naval, military or air forces; or

(d) affecting the relations of the Government with foreign Princes or States; or

(e) regulating any central subject or reserved subjects or affecting any Act passed by Parliament.[53]

Questions

Questions might be asked for the purpose of obtaining information on a matter of public concern, and might be disallowed by the President if they related to a matter which was not primarily the concern of the local Government.[54]

Resolutions

Subject to rules and standing orders the President decided on the admissibillity of resolutions for which 15 clear days' notice was necessary. The Governor might disallow any resolution on the ground that it could not be moved without detriment to the public interest or on the ground that it related to a matter which was not primarily the concern of local Government.[55]

Motions for Adjournment for Purposes of Debates

A motion for an adjournment of the business of the council for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of

urgent public importance might be made with the consent of the President. Subject to certain restrictions, the Governor had power, notwithstanding the consent of the President, to disallow any motion for adjournment on the ground that it could not be moved without detriment to the public interest or on the ground that it related to a matter which was not primarily the concern of the local Government. If the Governor so disallowed, such a motion on adjournment could not be permitted by the President and no further discussion of the motion could take place.[56]

Legislation was initiated by a motion made in Council for leave to introduce a bill unless the Governor had previously ordered the publication of the bill together with the statement of objects and reasons.[57]

When a bill was passed by the Council, the Secretary made such formal corrections as might be necessary and submitted a copy to the President for his signature. When the bill had been signed by the President, the Secretary submitted it to the Governor for his assent. After the signature of the Governor the bill became an Act.[58]

Electorate and Elections

For the election of the seventy-six elected members of the Council the province was divided up into 76 constituencies, namely 42 Non-Mohammedan rural, 15 Mohammedan rural, 6 Non-Mohammedan urban and 3 Mohammedan urban. These general constituencies covered the whole geographical area of the province, each district forming one or more constituencies according to its size and population. There were also 10 special constituencies of which five corresponding to the five Commissioners' divisions formed land-holders constituencies while two special constituencies represented mining, one European, one planting and one university interests. In addition to the 103 members noted above, two more persons were

nominated by the Governor as expert members for the purpose of any bill introduced or proposed to be introduced in the Legislative Council.[59]

The qualifications for a voter in general constituencies were broadly the status of a male resident British subject of not less than 21 years of age, of sufficient means to pay a certain minimum contribution to the public revenues. The Council, however, had power to remove by resolution the sex disqualification and to grant the right of voting to women, but this power was not exercised. The local Government had also the power to exempt from the disqualification of not being a British subject of such states. In urban areas an assessment was made in respect of income tax of any amount, or of municipal tax amounting to Rs. 3.00 a year, or the possession within the constituency of any of the qualifications of a rural voter qualifications. In rural areas the liability to pay Rs. 12.00 as cess by the proprietor of an estate of Rs. 100.00 by a tenure holder, by raiyat cess varying from Rs. 16 to Rs. 8 formed the necessary qualification. Assessment of not less than Rs. 1-8-0 under the Bengal Local Self-Government Act, 1885 was made. All retired, pensioned or discharged officers or soldiers of His Majesty's Army were qualified to vote. The regulation, framed under the electoral rules, provided for preparation, publication and revision of electoral rolls for each constituency. Provision was made for the identification of a voter before his vote was recorded. The counting of votes was done by returning officers who reported the result of the election of the local Government.[60]

Qualification of Candidates for Elections

Candidates for election were to be males and must have had their names on electoral rolls. The names of the candidates had to be proposed and seconded. A person was not qualified for election as a member if he was insolvent or

had been convicted of certain criminal offences, or was under 25 years of age. Above all an official was also not qualified to stand for election. The validity of election could be challenged by election petitions, which was decided by specially constituted election tribunals appointed by the Governor. If in any case an election was declared void, a fresh election was ordered by the Governor.[61] The Council was elected for three years.[62]

The first elections under the Act of 1919 took place between 29th November and 16th December, 1920.[63]

The elections were conducted in the course of a single day at polling stations. Simple but effective precautions were taken to guard against impersonation and mistakes. Each voter was identified by the local village police. Presiding Officers supervised the polls on the spot and coloured ballot boxes helped the illiterate. The success of these precautions was indicated by the fact that no case of impersonation was reported, and only 150 out of nearly 99,000 votes were reported invalid on the ground of any technical defect. The total electorate for the general constituencies amounted to 325,543 and for the special constituencies to 1,918. The combined total electorate amounted to 1.9 per cent of the adult male population of the province according to the figures of the census taken in March, 1921. No fewer that 98,824 votes were polled in 46 contested elections, i.e., nearly 41 per cent of the total electorate of these constituencies. When compared to the last general election in England where the votes polled in contested elections amounted to only 55 per cent of the voters the polling in Bihar was quite encouraging.[64]

The Effect of Non-cooperation on the Elections

The influence of the movement on the elections was most felt in urban areas and particularly among Mohammedans; only 13 per cent of the electorate voted in Tirhut division and 27 per cent in the Bhagalpur division.[65]

It was clear beyond doubt that the landlords formed a compact party with a considerable majority over all others combined.[66] A raiyat's party in the council was in stage of development.[67]

The elections to the Indian Legislative Assembly and to the Council of States

Concurrently with the elections to the provincial council took place the elections to the Indian Legislative Assembly and to the Council of State.[68] Besides the general elections there was also provision for by-election. Four such by-elections were held during tenure of the first Legislative Council.

The first Legislative Council was organised on 7th February, 1921. It was addressed by Governor Lord Sinha. The following members constituted the first Legislative Council of the province.

List of members of the First Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council under the Act of 1919

The Hon'ble Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha (President, Member of the Executive Council), The Hon'ble Mr. H. Mc.Pherson (Member of the Executive Council).

NOMINATED

(1) Mr. J.D. Sifton, C.I.E.; (2) Mr. E.L.L. Hammond, C.B.E.; (3) Mr. H.K. Briscoe, C.I.E.; (4) Mr. M.G. Hallet; (5) Mr. J.A. Hubbak; (6) Mr. W.S. Bremner; (7) Mr. H.L.L. Allenson; (8) Mr. E.H. Berthoud, O.B.E.; (9) Mr. J.F. Gruning, C.I.E.; (10) Mr. V.H. Jackson; (11) Col. H. Austen-Smith, C.I.E.; and (12) Mr. R.T. Dundas, C.I.E.[69]

Mostly Englishmen were nominated as official members for the Council of Bihar and Orissa.[70]

ELECTED

Non-Mohammedan Urban

Babu Shyam Narayan Sinha (Patna Division), Rai Sahib Ram Gopal Singh Chaudhari (Patna), Rai Bahadur Dwarika Nath (Tirhut Division), Rai Bahadur Radha Govind Chaudhuri (Chotanagpur Division).

Non-Mohammedan Rural

Babu Mithila Saran Sinha (West Patna), Babu Ganesh Datta Singh (East Patna), Babu Chhote Narayan Singh (West Gaya), Rai Bahadur Kashi Nath Singh (Central Gaya), Babu Rameshwar Prasad Singh (East Gaya), Babu Dwarika Prasad Singh (Arrah), Maharaja Bahadur Guru Mahadevashram Prasad Sahi (Central Shahabad), Babu Rajivaranjan Prasad Sinha (South Shahabad), Babu Nirsu Narayan Sinha (South Saran), Babu Lakshmi Mohan Mishra (North Muzaffarpur), Chaudhuri Raghunandan Prasad Sinha (East Muzaffarpur), Babu Kapildeo Sahay (West Muzaffarpur), Babu Radha Krishna (Hajipur), Babu Raghubans Thakur (North West Darbhanga), Babu Shiva Shankar Jha (North East Darbhanga), Babu Ram Nihora Singh (South East Darbhanga), Babu Kameshwar Narayan Sinha (Samastipur,) Babu Jyotish Chandra Bhattacharjee (Bhgalpur), Swami Vidyanand *alias* Bishwas Bharan Prasad (North Bhagalpur), Babu Bhuvaneshwari Prasad Mandal (Central Bhagalpur), Rai Saheb Kharag Narayan (North East Monghyr), Babu Sukhraj Roy (South Bhagalpur), Babu Deoki Nandan Prasad Singh (East Monghyr), Maharaj Kumar Chandra Mauleshwar Prasad Singh (South West Monghyr), Rai Bahadur Prithvi Chand Lal Chaudhuri (Purnea), Babu Jogendra Naraya Sinha (Santal Parganas-North), Babu Satya Narayan Sinha (Santal Parganas-South), Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Roy (Ranchi), Rai Bahadur Gopi Krishna (Hazaribagh, Babu

Deoki Prasad Sinha (Palamau), Babu Shivadas Banerjee (North Manbhum) Rai Bahadur Jyotirmoy Chatterji (South Manbhum), Babu Manki (Singhbhum), Babu Madheveshvaradra Shahi (North Saran), Babu Birhor Narayan Chandra Dhir Narendra (North Cuttack), Babu Rebati Kant Ghosh (South Cuttack), Rai Bahadur Narendra Narayan Roy Mahasay (North Balasore), Chaudhuri Bhagbat Prasad Samantarai Mahapatra (South Balasore), Babu Pitabas Patnaik (North Puri), Mahanth Gadadhar Ramanuj Das (South Sambalpur), Babu Shankar Prasad Mishra (Sambalpur).

Mohammedan Urban

Mr. Muhammad Yunus (Patna), Khan Bahadur Saiyid Ahmad Hussain (Tirhut Division).

Mohammedan Rural

Maulavi Saiyid Muhammad Hussain (East Patna), Maulavi Malik Mukhtar Ahmad (Gaya), Maulavi Rafiz Nurul Haqq (Shahabad), Maulavi Saiyid Mubarak Ali (Saran), Maulavi Saiyid Mehdi Hasan (Muzaffarpur), Maulavi Latafat Hussain Khan (Darbhanga), Khan Bahadur Saiyid Muhammad Tahir (Bhagalpur Division), Khan Bahadur Saiyid Muhammad Naim (Bhagalpur), Mr. Shah Muhammad Yahya (Monghyr), Mr. Saiyid Moin-ud-din Mirza (Kishanganj), Maulavi Mir Faiyaz Ali (Purnea), Maulavi Muhammad Umaid Ali (Santhal-Parganas), Khan Bahadur Khwaja Muhammad Nur (Chotanagpur), Maulavi Saikh Abdul Majid (Orissa Division).

Land Holders

Raja Harihar Prasad Narayan Singh, O.B.E. (Patna Division), Babu Krishnadeo Narayan Mehta (Tirhut Division), Raja Bahadur Kirty-anand Singh (Bhagalpur), Babu Charu Chandra Rai Chaudhuri (Orissa Division),

Kumar Thakurai Girvar Prasad Singh (Chotanagpur Division).

Others

Mr. P.K. Sen (Patna University), Mr. P. Kennedy (European Constituency), Mr. J.V. Jameson (Planting Constituency), Mr. J.H. Pattinson (Indian Mining Association), Babu Umesh Chandra Banerjee (Indian Mining Federation), Maharaja Bahadur Sir Raveneshwar Prasad Singh, K.C.I.E. (Nominated), Mr. Saiyid Hasan Imam (Nominated), Rai Bahadur Purnendu Narayan Sinha (Domiciled Bengali Community), Mr. F.E.L. Marrison (Anglo-Indian Community), Rev. Emanuel Sukh (Nominated-Depressed Classes), Babu Bishwanath Kar (Nominated-Depressed Classes), Rev. E.H.T. Whitlay (Nominated Aborigines), Mr. Dhan Masin Panna (Nominated Aborigines), Mr. Baij Nath (Nominated Labouring Classes), Mr. Dhanjishah Meherjibhai Madan (Nominated-Industrial interests, other than planting and mining), Rev. Prittam Luther Singh (Nominated Indian Christian Community), Mr. S.B. Dhavli, Secretary (Nominated).

List of Officers of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council during the Session 1921-1923

The Hon'ble Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha, President; Mr. S.B. Dhavle, I.C.S., Secretary; Mr. G.A. Sammuel, B.A., L.L.B., Bar-at-Law, Assistant Secretary.[71]

A review of the working of the Legislative Council presented an interesting picture of the Legislative process. In the first Legislative Council which met in 1921, the following bills were passed without much debat and discussions:

(a) The Bihar and Orissa Deputy President Salary Bill, 1917.

(b) Jharia Water Supply (Amendment) Bill, 1921.

(c) Patna University (Amendment) Bill, 1921.

(d) Bihar and Orissa Municipal Bill was introduced in Council at the close of the year.[72]

The various resolutions introduced and discussed in the Council showed a tendency of the Indian non-official members, both Mohammedans and non-mohammedans, to rush for reforms. This was resented by the official side which described such resolutions as idealistic and impractical. One such resolution raised the question of prohibition of liquor in the province.[73] The question of women's franchise was also raised by individual members which elicited many interesting individual views on the social position of women in India. The resolution was, however, lost by ten votes. The subjects of non-cooperation was also raised in a resolution which recommended that political prisoners, including those guilty of non-cooperation, should be treated in the same way as the political prisoners of England and European countries. The Government assured the council to consider the matter with sympathy. The resolution was carried. The members also showed keen interest in the legislative matter by putting question to the Minister. This was indicated by the fact that no fewer than 639 questions were put by the members in the year 1921 alone.[74]

The year 1922 opened with new hope. Three sessions of council were held during the year of which two, the fourth and sixth, were held in Patna and one, fifth, at Ranchi. Most of the important legislation of the year was passed in the fifth session, though some of the non-official members protested that the consideration of a major item ought not to be taken up at Ranchi, on the ground that it was difficult for the members to attend the meetings there.[75]

The important bills passed during the year 1922 were:

(a) Village Administration Act.

(b) The Municipal Act.

(c) The Private Irrigation Works Act.

(d) Minor Irrigation Works Act.[76]

The number of questions asked during the year was 642. Some of the questions were asked with intention of calling the attention of Government to grievances which required remedy. The Government usually referred to published reports of the committee and the annual reports of heads of the department in reply to the question.[77]

Among the various resolutions introduced by the members the most important were those relating to the act of the executive in the administration of law and order. One resolution urged the Government to withdraw a provision in the criminal law declaring certain Voluntary Associations illegal, to release all those persons convicted under this law. The Government did pay attention to this resolution. Most of the resolutions on political subjects were lost.[78]

The year 1923 marked the end of the first council. Two sessions of the council were held during the year, one at Patna and the other at Ranchi.[79] Among the Acts introduced and passed the most significant was the Food Adulteration (Amendment) Act. It was a private bill.[80] Another important Act was State Aid to Industries Act which provided for State aid in the form of loans and other credit activities towards the establishment of new industries.[81] Besides, amendments were also passed effecting change in Chotanagpur Tenancy Act and the Jharia Water Supply Act.[82]

The period of the office of the first legislative council came to an end in September, 1923. The next general election was held on 29th and 30th November, 1923. The

electoral rolls, however, had been revised at that time. The revised rolls showed a small increase in the number of the electorate. The total number of voters on the rolls of Legislative Council was now 3,38,507 or about 3 per cent more than 1920.[83] The voters showed increased interest in the election. About 52 per cent voters appeared to cast their votes. This figure was compared with the turnout of voter of Great Britain. But it was forgotten that franchise was still restricted in this province. The voters represented only one per cent of the total population as against 46 per cent in Great Britain. An important feature of this election was absence of political party. The candidates of Swarajist party were the only members of a political party.[84]

Members of the Second Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council under the Act of 1919

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Khwaja Muhammad Nur-President.

Mr. John Augustus Samuel, Bar-at-Law—Secretary.

Mr. Saiyid Anwar Yusuf, Bar-at-Law—Assistant Secretary.

Ex-Officio Members

The Hon'ble Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha, Bar-at-Law.

The Hon'ble Mr. Egbert Laurie Lucas Hammond, C.S.I., C.B.E., I.C.S.

Nominated Officials

(1) Mr. Blanchard Foley, I.C.S.; (2) Mr. John Rutherford Dain, I.C.S.; (3) Mr. Benard Abdy Collins, I. C.S.; (4) Mr. Arthur Loveday Inglis, I.C.S.; (5) Mr. Hugh Kanaston Briscoe, C.I.E., I.C.S.; (6) Mr. Arther Edgar Scrope, I.C.S.; (7) Rai Bahadur Bishnu Swarup; (8) Mr. Henry Wardle; (9) Mr. Walter Swain, C.I.E.; (10) Mr.

George Earnest Fawcus, C.B.E.; (11) Lt. Col. James Masson, I.M.S.; and (12) Mr. Edward Selwyn Hoernle, I.C.S.

Nominated Non-Officials

(1) Raja Bahadur Harihar Prashad Narayan Singh, C.B.E.

(2) Khan Bahadur Nawabzada Saiyid Ashraf-ud-din Ahmad.

(3) Rajá Devakinandan Prasad Singh.

(4) Mr. Saiyid Sultan Ahmad.

Nominated Representatives of Classes and Communities

(1)	Rev. Edward Hamilton Whitely	Aborigines
(2)	Rev. Prittam Luther Singh	Aborigines
(3)	Babu Bishwanath Kar	Depressed classes
(4)	Rev. Emmanuel Sukh	Depressed classes
(5)	Mr. Dhanjishah Meherjibhai Madan	Industrial Interests other than planting and mining
(6)	Rai Bahadur Jyotish Chandra Bhattacharji	The Domiciled Bengali Community
(7)	Mr. Francis Ernest Lopes Morrison	The Anglo-Indian Community
(8)	Rev. S.K. Tarafdar	The Indian Christian Community
(9)	Mr. Baij Nath	The Labouring Classes

ELECTED MEMBERS

Non-Mohammedan Urban

Babu Shyam Narayan Sinha Sharma (Patna Division); Maharaja Bahadur Guru Mahadevasram Prashad Sah (Patna); Rai Bahadur Dwarika Nath (Tirhut Division); Mr. T. Lail (Bhagalpur Division) [From Orissa]; Mr. Madhusudan Das, C.I.E. (Orissa Division); Mr. Jamut Bahan Sen (Chotanagpur Division).

Non-Mohammedan Rural

Babu Guru Sahay Lal (East Patna), Babu Rajendhari Sinha (West Patna), Babu Gupteshwar Prasad Singh (West Gaya), Babu Bishun Prasad (Central Gaya), Babu Rameshwar Prasad Singh (East Gaya), Babu Sarda Prasad Singh (Central Shahabad), Babu Rajivaranjam Prasad Sinha (South Shahabad), Babu Dwarika Prasad Singh (Arrah), Mahanth Ishwar Gir (North West Darbhanga), Babu Shiva Shankar Jha (North-East Darbhanga), Babu Ram Nihora Singh (South-East Darbhanga), Babu Ramashray Prasad Chaudhuri (Samastipur), Babu Shivabachan Sinha (North Muzaffarpur), Mahanth Darshan Dasji (East Muzaffarpur), The Hon'ble Babu Ganesh Dutta Singh (West Muzaffarpur), Babu Radha Krishna (Hajipur), Babu Jaleshwar Prasad (North Saran), Rai Bahadur Chandra Ketu Narain Singh (South Saran), Babu Harishankar Sinha (North Champaran), Babu Kedar Nath Prasad Sah (South Champaran), Babu Rajendra Mishra (North Bhagalpur), Babu Bhuneshwar Prasad Mandal (Central Bhagalpur), Babu Ananta Prashad (South Bhagalpur), Maharaja Bahadur Chandra Mauleshwar Prasad Singh (South-West Monghyr), Rai Saheb Kharag Narain (North West Monghyr), Rai Bahadur Lakshmi Prasad Sinha (East

Monghyr), Rai Prithi Chand Choudhri (Purnea), Babu Jogendra Narayan Singh (Santhal Parganas), Babu Rameshwar Lai Marwari (Santal Parganas South), Babu Birbar Narayan Chandra Dhir Narendra (North Cuttack), Babu Lakshmidhar Mahanti (South Cuttack), Babu Radha Ranjan Das (North Balasore), Babu Dogavaris Misra (North Puri), Chaudhuri Bhagvat Prasad Samantari Mahapatra (South Balasore), Babu Jagabandhu Sinha (South Puri), Babu Ram Narain Mishra (Sambalpur), Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Ray (Ranchi), Babu Krishna Ballabh Sahay (Hazaribagh), Thakurai Brahmeshwar Dayal Singh (Palamau), Babu Nilkanth Chatterjee (South Manbhum), Dulu Manki (Singhbhum), Babu Bakshi Jagdam Prasad Lal (North Manbhum).

Mohammedan Urban

Mr. Muhammad Yunus (Patna Division), Maulavi Mati-ur-Rahman (Tirhut Division), Mr. Abdul Wahab Khan (Bhagalpur Division).

Mohammedan Rural

Maulavi Saiyid Muhammad Hussain (East Patna), The Hon'ble Sir Saiyid Muhammad Fakhr-ud-din Khan Bahadur (West Patna), Khan Bahadur Ashfaq Hussain (Gaya), Maulavi Saiyid Mehdi Hassan (Muzaffarpur), Maulavi Saidul Haque (Darbhanga), Maulavi Saiyid Mubarak Ali (Saran), Maulavi Muhammad Zahurul Haque (Champaran), Khan Bahadur Saiyid Muhammad Naim (Bhagalpur), Mr. Sah Muhammad Yahya (Monghyr), Maulavi Mir Faiyaz Ali (Purnea), Mr. Saiyid Moinuddin Mirza (Kishanganj), Maulavi Muhammad Umaid Ali (Santal Parganas), Maulavi Shaikh Muhammad Hussain (Chotanagpur). [From Orissa Division] : Maulavi Saiyid Tajammul Ali.

Land Holders

Babu Chandipat Sahay, Rai Bahadur Krishnadev Narayan Mehta (Tirhut Division), Raja Bahadur Kirtyanand Singh (Bhagalpur Division), Raja Rajindra Narayan Bhenja Deo, C.B E. (Orissa Division), Babu Nageshwar Baksh Ray (Chotanagpur Division).

Others

Mr. Sri Narayan Sahay (Patna University), Mr. William Ora Mac-Gregor (European Constituency), Mr. Kenneth Lauchlan Mackenzie (Planting Constituency), Mr. Archibald Arthur Forbes Bray (Indian Mining Association), Babu Narendra Nath Mukharji (Indian Mining Federation).[85]

The second Legislative Council of the province met on 1st January, 1924. Between January, 1924 and March, 1925 the new council held three sessions, two at Patna and one at Ranchi. As many as six bills were passed during this period of which the following were most important:

(a) The Bihar and Orissa Aerial Ropeways Act.

(b) The Chotanagpur Encumbered Estates Act.

(c) Sambhalpur Bihar and Orissa Municipal Act.

(d) Jharia Water Supply (Amendment) Act.

(e) Local Funds Audit Act.[86]

None of these measures provoked any opposition.[87] The question of the finance and audit of the Local Bodies budget, voting of the demand were discussed and passed. The budget of 1924-25 was passed without any opposition. Among the various resolutions one which provoked great interest was relating to the site of Patna University. This resolution was moved by Sir Md. Fakhruddin at the Ranchi Session of Council.[88] Krishna Ballabh Sahay moved a resolution to revise the jail code in order to remove the

difficulties that appeared in dealing with political prisoners. Sri Rajendhari Singh moved a resolution asking the Government to spend Rs. 60 Lakhs for the expansion of primary education. On the assurance of Government he withdrew the resolution.[89]

J.B. Sen moved the resolution to regulate appointments in the medical college which was established at Patna.[90] Babu Rameshwar Prasad Singh wanted irrigation facilities in the district of Patna, Manbhum and Gaya. This resolution was passed.[91] Babu Rameshwar Prasad Singh wanted a medical college at Bhagalpur. Subsequently he withdrew the resolution. Mubarak Ali tried to get the permission to discuss the enrolment of special constables in the Gopalganj Sub-division of Saran District but the President did not allow the matter to be raised.[92] The same session discussed the question of separation of judicial and executive functions.[93] It was also suggested that Urdu script should be allowed to be used in the judicial proceedings but the attempt failed.[94] Political subjects occupied a less prominent place in the discussion of the council.[95] During the 1925-26 another meeting of the council was held. Two sessions of the council were held, one at Patna and the other at Ranchi. The composition of the council remained substantially the same, although there were five by-elections during the period. The only organised group was of Swarajists who were eight in number. The official members formed another organised group and sat together, while the nominated members formed another group. During the discussion of budget demand the Swarajist left the council. The budget was passed after a hot discussion.[96] A number of bills were passed of which the following were the most important. (1) The Bihar and Orissa Mining Settlement (Amendment) Bill, (2) The Mussalman Wakf (Amendment) Bill, and (3) The Chotanagpur Rural Police (Amendment) Bill. Eight other bills were introduced, six by non-official members

and there was also one non-official bill carried over from the previous year.[97]

A number of resolutions were introduced but very few of them accepted and discussed.[98] The last session of the second Legislative Council met at Ranchi in August, 1926. The only bill which was passed during this period was the Bihar and Orissa Public Highways Bill, 1926, which provided for maintenance and improvements of roads.[99] Among the various resolutions introduced and adopted in this session, the most important dealt with the protection of female labour, employed in the coal field and industrial concerns in the province.[100]

After the elections of the Third Legislative Council, its first meeting was held on 13th January, 1926 at Patna.[101]

Members of the Third Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council under the Act of 1919.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Khwaja Muhammad Nur—President.

Mr. John Augustus Samuel, Bar-at-Law - Secretary.

Mr. Saiyid Anwar Yusuf, Bar-at-Law—Assistant of Secretary.

Ex-Officio Members (2)

The Hon'ble Mr. Egbert Laurie Lucas Hammond, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.

The Hon'ble Maharaja Bahadur Keshav Prasad Singh, C.B.E.

Nominated Officials (13)

Mr. Balchard Foley, C.S.I., I.C.S., Mr. James David Sifton, C.I.E., I.C.S., Mr. Bernard Abdy Collins, C.I.E., I.C.S., Mr. Arthus Edger Scroope, I.C.S., Mr. Philip Cubitt Tallents, I.C.S., Mr. Herbert Ellis Horsfield, I.C.S., Mr.

Eric Cecil Ansorge, I.C.S., Mr. William Hawthorne Sewis, I.C.S., Rai Bahadur Bishun Swarup, Mr. Henry Abraham Cubbay, Mr. Walter Swain, C.I.E., Col. Hugh Ainsworth, I.M.S., William Bissill Heyclock, I.C.S.

Nominated Non-officials (3)

Raja Devakinanda Prasad Singh; Dewan Bahadur Srikrishna Mahapatra; Khan Bahadur Shah Muhammad Yahya.

Nominated Representatives of Classes and Communities (9)

Rev. Edward Hamiliton Whitley	Aborigines
Mr. Daniel Lakra	Aborigines
Rev. Brajnanda Das	Depressed classes
Babu Sridhar Samal	Depressed classes
Rai Bahadur Radha Krishna Jalan	Industrial interests other than planting and mining
Rai Bahadur Kalipada Sarkar	The Domiciled Bengali Community
Mr. Alfred Eustace D'Silva	The Anglo-Indian Community
M. Sorab Solomon Day	The Indian Christian Community
Babu Harendra Nath Bannerji	The Labouring classes

ELECTED MEMBERS (76)

Non-Mohammedan Urban

Babu Jagat Narayan Lal (Patna Division), Babu Brij Raj Krishna (Patna), Rai Bahadur Dwarika Nath (Tirhut Division), Babu Rameshwar Narayan Agarwal (Bhagalpur

Division), Mr. Jimut Bahan Sen (Chotanagpur Division), Rai Sahib Loknath Misra (Orissa Division).

Non-Mohammedan Rural

Babu Gur Sahay Lal (East Patna), Babu Rajandhari Sinha (West Patna), Mr. Rajkishore Lal (West Gaya), Babu Bhagwati Sharan Singh (Central Gaya), The Hon'ble Babu Ganesh Datta Singh (East Gaya), Pandit Dudhnath Pandey (Central Shahabad), Babu Sidheshwari Prasad (Arrah), Mahanth Ishvar Gir (North-West Darbhanga), Babu Sheo Shankar Jha (North-East Darbhanga), Babu Girindra Mohan Misra (South-East Darbhanga), Babu Satya Narayan Singh (Samastipur), Thakur Ramnandan Sinha (East Muzaffarpur), Babu Ramdayalu Sinha (East Muzaffarpur), Mahanth Badri Narayan Das (West Muzaffarpur), Babu Deep Narayan Sinha (Hajipur), Babu Shrinandan Prasad (North Saran), Babu Nirsu Narayan Singh (South Saran), Babu Harbans Sahaya (North Champaran), Babu Rameshwar Prasad Datta (South Champaran), Babu Rajendra Mishra (North Bhagalpur), Raj Bahadur Lakshmi Narayan Sinha (Central Bhagalpur), Babu Kailash Bihari Lall (South Bhagalpur), Babu Kalika Prasad Singh (South West Monghyr), Babu Ram Charitar Singh (North West Monghyr), Babu Sri Krishna Sinha (East Monghyr), Rai Bahadur Prithi Chand Lal Choudhuri (Purnea), Babu Pratapendra Chandra Pande (Santhal-Parganas), Babu Rameshwar Lal Marwari (Santhal-Parganas-South), Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Ray (Ranchi), Babu Krishna Ballabh Sahaya (Hazaribagh), Babu Deoki Prasad Sinha (Palamau), Babu Nilkanth Chatterjee (South Manbhum), Babu Devendra Nath Semanta (Singhbhum), Babu Gunendra Nath Rai (North Manbhum), Babu Narayan Bilbar Narayan Samanta (North Cuttack), Babu Lakshmi Dhar Mahanti (South Cuttack), Babu Nand Kishore Das (North Balasore), Babu Harekrishna Mehtab (South Balasore), Babu Godavaris

Misra (North Puri), Babu Lingaraj Misra (South Puri), Babu Braj Mohan Pandey (Sambalpur).

Mohammedan Urban

Mr. Saiyid Abdul Aziz (Patna Division), Maulavi Abdul Ghani (Tirhut Division).

Mohammedan Rural

Maulavi Saiyid Muhammad Hussain (East Patna), Hon'ble Sir Saiyid Muhammad Fakhr-ud-din Khan Bahadur, Kt. (West Patna), Maulavi Ahmad Husain Qazi (Gaya), Mr. Saiyid Athar Hussain (Shahabad), Maulavi Mohammad Ishaq (Muzaffarpur), Maulavi Abdul Hamid Khan (Darbhanga), Maulavi Saiyid Mubarak Ali Sahib (Saran). Khan Bahadur Muhammad Jan (Champaran), Khan Bahadur Saiyid Muhammad Naim (Bhagalpur), Choudhuri Muhammad Nazirul Hasan (Monghyr), Chaudhuri Shaikh Mujibur Rahman (Purnea), Mr. Saiyid Moinuddin Mirza (Kishanganj), Maulavi Abdul Bari (Santhal Parganas), Khan Bahadur Khwaja Muhammad Nur (Chotanagpur Division), Maulavi Saiyid Muhammad Nurul Huda (Orissa Division).

Land Holders

Raja Bahadur Harihar Prasad Narayan Singh, O.B.E. (Patna Division), Chandreshwar Prasad Narayan Sinha (Tirhut Division), Rai Bahadur Dilip Narayan Singh (Bhagalpur Division), Bhaiya Raj Kishore Deo (Chotanagpur Division), Raja Rajendra Narayan Bhanjadeo (Orissa Division).

Others

Babu Baldeva Sahay	Patna University
Mr. Williams Ord McGregor	European Constituency
Mr. Edward Joseph Finch	Planting Constituency

Mr. Archibald Arthus Forbes Bray	Indian Mining Association
Mr. Amrit Lal Ojha	Indian Mining Federation.[102]

The following Bills were passed into law during the first year of the Third Legislative Council in 1927-28:

(i) The Bihar and Orissa Excise (Amendment) Act-1927.[103]

(ii) The Bihar and Orissa, Opium Smoking Bill, 1928.[104]

Other Bills : Ten more Bills were introduced of which three were by non-official members:

(i) Chotanagpur Tenancy (Amendment), 1927.

(ii) The Bihar and Orissa Mica Bill, 1927.

(iii) The Bihar Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1927,

Three bills were tabled to amend the Local Self-Government Act.

A motion to refer to select committee the Chotanagpur Tenure holders Separate Rent Account Bill, 1927 was rejected by the casting vote of the President. Bihar and Orissa Public Demands Recovery (Amendment) Bill was referred to a select committee by a majority of three votes. The Bihar and Orissa Cattle Bill and Patna University (Amendment) Bill were only introduced.[105]

The object of Bihar and Orissa Excise Act, 1927 was to regulate the possession and sale of dangerous drugs and liquors. The object of Opium-Making bill was to prohibit opium making and exception was made in the case of addicts who were required to take licences. The Bihar and Orissa Mica Bill aimed at preventing the theft of mica. The Bihar Tenancy Bill sought to protect the rights of raiyats. The various resolutions introduced were relating to the question of depression in Coal Industry, the classification of Chotanagpur as a backward area, the administration of Sone Canal and the problems of subordinate education service. The budget for 1927-28 was passed without much

opposition.[106] The autumn session of the council met at Ranchi in August, 1927. Another meeting was held in March, 1928 at Patna. During the period under review the Minister of Local Self-Government was criticised for misusing the power of nomination to the District Boards. A no-confidence motion was also brought against Ganesh Dutta Singh, Minister Incharge of Local Self-Government. The Motion was defeated.[107] This council also discussed the question of a military training school and the use of vernacular script in the council.[108] The winter session of the council met at Patna in January, 1928. According to a decision of the Congress Party the members of the party in the council appeared in the council but after a short while walked out one by one. The result was that most of the resolutions submitted by Congress members did not come up for discussion. However, some of the resolutions of the Congress members were moved by non-Congress members; one such resolution was relating to the use of Urdu script in the courts of the province. Originally, the resolution stood in the name of Md. Ishaque, Congress member. But the same resolution was moved by a non-Congress member, Md. Hussain. The resolution was passed and recommended the introduction of Urdu as an optional court script in three Divisions namely Patna, Tirhut and Bhagalpur. Another resolution moved by Mubarak Ali urged the Government to take immediate steps towards the reduction of agriculture indebtedness and to establish Land Mortgage Banks to provide the agriculturists with loans on long and easy terms. After discussion the resolution was withdrawn in view of the sympathetic assurance given by the Government. On 4th February, 1928 the Swarajists attended the meeting of the council and used their weight in refusing reference of Bihar and Orissa Mica Bill to the Select Committee. The motion was rejected by 42 votes to 28. The council passed the budget for 1928-29.[109]

The first meeting of the council during the session 1928-29 was held at Ranchi in August, 1928. The second sitting was held at Patna during February-March, 1929. Four bills passed into law, two during the first session and two during the second. The first of these was the Bihar and Orissa Public Demands Recovery (Amendment) Bill.[110] The second was Patna Administration (Amendment) Bill 1928.[111] The third Bill was the Chotanagpur Tenure-Holders' Rent Account Bill, 1928.[112] The fourth Bill was Chotanagpur Tenancy (Amendment) Bill 1927.[113] Twenty four resolutions were moved of which eleven were adopted. The most important resolutions were put forward for appointment of a Committee of the Legislative Council to cooperate with Simon Commission. The resolution was opposed by the Swarajist Party in full force. After a lengthy but not rancorous debate the motion was carried by 50 votes to 44. The Muslim members with a few exceptions voted solidity with the Government. In this session the Minister for Local Self-Government was criticised by the members of the Swarajist Party for superseding the Gaya District Board.[114] The winter session of the council met at Patna on 4th February, 1929. As usual the budget was passed without much discussion.[115] But some of the resolutions moved during this session related to the promotion of Khadi, industrial survey of state, use of Urdu in the court and the franchise of women.[116] These resolutions, however, were not carried except the franchise of women. In March, Ram Charitra Singh (Swarajist) raised the issue of Indianisation of forest service. The motion was defeated.[117] The Swarajists criticised the Government because of its report in connection with the working of reforms.[118]

During 1929-30 as usual two sessions of the Legislative Council were held, the autumn session at Ranchi during September, 1929 and the winter session at

Patna between January and March, 1930. Three bills became law during the period under review. They were : (i) Chotanagpur Tenancy (Amendment) Bill which was introduced in 1927 and passed by the council in 1929; (ii) The Orissa Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1928 which had been sponsored by a private member also became a law; and (iii) The council at last sanctioned legislation in respect of Mica Mining.[119]

Among the resolution moved, the one that was most important related the removal of sex disqualification for election and nomination to the Legislative Council.[120] For the first time in February, 1929 women were given the right to vote.[121] The Muslim members moved a bill for adequate representation in Municipal and District Boards by means of separate electorate. Mr. Mobarak Ali criticised the Government for placating the members of upper classes and ignoring the masses.[122] In March, 1930 the question of cow sacrifice came up for discussion. The Hindu members led by Sachchidanand Sinha and Dwarika Nath expressed the view that the Hindus could not accept the Muslim proposals for sacrifice and pleaded for good will and mutual respect for feeling of each other.[123]

The general election for the fourth Legislative Council was held in September, 1930. Forty-one members of the old council retained their seats and thirty-five new members were elected. The Swarajist party did not stand wholly composed of the moderate elements.[124]

Members of the Fourth Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council, Under the Act of 1919

The Hon'ble Babu Nirsu Narayan Sinha, M.A., B.L.-President.

Rai Bahadur Lakshmidhar Mahanti-Deputy President.

Mr. Saiyid Anwar Yusuf, Bar-at-Law—Secretary.

Babu Premananda Saha, B.A., B.L.-Assistant Secretary.

Ex-officio Members

The Hon'ble Mr. James David Sifton, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.

The Hon'ble Raja Rajendra Narayan Bhanja Deo. C.B.E.

Nominated Officials

Mr. Patrick William Murphy, I.C.S., Mr. Maurice Garnier Hallett, C.I.E., I.C.S., Mr. Henry Abraham Gubbay, Mr. Godfrey Elwin Owen, I.C.S., Mr. Ernest Leslie Glass, Mr. James Augustine Sweeney, C.I.E.. I.C.S., Mr. Bhalchandra Krishna Gokhale. I.C.S., Mr. William Bailie Brett, I.C.S., Mr. George Ernest Fawcus, C.I.E., C.B.E., Mr. Geoffrey Steele Handerson, Mr. Reginald John Hirst, C.I.E., Mr. Rai Bahadur Bhuban Mohan Chatterji.

Nominated Non-officials

Khan Bahadur Shah Muhammad Yahya, Rai Bahadur Kedar Nath, Babu Swayambar Das, Babu Bimla Charan Singh.

Nominated Representatives of Classes and Communities

Mr. Sagram Hembrome	Aborigines
Garbett Captain Manki	Aborigines
Reverend Brajananda Das	Depressed classes
Babu Ram Narayan	Depressed classes
Rai Bahadur Ram Ranvijaya Singh	Industrial interests other than planting and mining
Babu Jogendra Chandra Mukherji	The Domiciled Bengali Community

Mr. Alfred Eustace D'Silva	The Anglo-Indian Community
Mr. Rowland Chandra	The Indian Christian Community
Rai Sahib Narendra Nath Banerji	The Labouring classes

ELECTED MEMBERS

Non-Mohammedan Urban

Babu Rajeshwari Prasad (Patna Division), Babu Shyam Narayan Singh Sharma (Patna Division), Rai Bahadur Dwarka Nath (Tirhut Division), Mr. Nand Kumar Ghosh (Chotanagpur Division), Babu Harihar Das (Orissa Division).

Non-Mohammadan Rural

Sir Ganesh Dutta Singh (East Patna), Babu Rajandhari Sinha (West Patna), Babu Ram Anugrah Narayan Singh (West Gaya), Babu Bhagwati Saran Singh (Central Gaya), Babu Rameshwar Prasad Singh (East Gaya), Mr. Sachchida Nand Sinha (Central Shahabad), Babu Radha Prasad Sinha (South Shahabad), Babu Radha Mohan Sinha (Arrah), Babu Hare Krishna Chaudhari (North West Darbhanga), Mahanth Manmohan Das (North East Darbhanga), Babu Sarda Nand Kumar (South East Darbhanga), Babu Ram Asray Prasad Chaudhuri (Samastipur), Babu Rameshwar Prasad Sahi (North Muzaffarpur), Babu Sri Narain Mehta (East Muzaffarpur), Babu Badri Narayan Singh (West Muzaffarpur), Babu Shyam Nandan Sahaya (Hajipur), Babu Srinandan Prasad Narayan Singh Sharma (North Saran), Babu Nirsu Narayan Singh (South Saran), Rai Bahadur Krishna Deo Narayan Mehtha (North Champaran), Babu Lalita Prasad Chaudhuri (South Champaran), Babu Haldhar Prasad

Singh (North Bhagalpur), Babu Rudra Pratap Singh (Central Bhagalpur), Mr. K. Lall (South Bhagalpur), Babu Sri Krishna Prasad (South West Monghyr), Rai Bahadur Lakshmi Prasad Sinha (East Monghyr), Raja Prithivi Chand Lal Chaudhuri (Purnea), Babu Shib Chandra Singh (Santal Parganas-North), Babu Ram Jivan Himat Singha (Santal Parganas-South), Rai Bahadur Sarat Chandra Ray (Ranch!), Babu Kalyan Singh (Hazaribagh), Bhaiya Rudra Pratap Deo (Palamau), Rai Bahadur Satish Chandra Sinha (South Manbhum), Babu Devendra Nath Samanta (Singhbhum), Babu Kunja Bihari Chandra (North Manbhum), Rai Bahadur Lakshmi Dhar Mahanti (North Cuttack), Babu Nikunja Kishore Das (South Cuttack), Babu Radha Nandan Das (Balasore), Babu Jagannath Das (South Balasore), Babu Godavari Mishra (North Puri), Rai Bahadur Loknath Mishra (South Puri), Babu Braj Mohan Panda (Sambalpur).

Mohammadan Urban

Mr. Saiyid Abdul Aziz (Patna Division), Maulavi Muhammad Abdul Ghani (Tirhut Division), Khan Bahadur Abdul Wahib Khan (Bhagalpur Division).

Mohammedan Rural

Khan Bahadur Saiyid Mohammad Hussain (East Patna), The Hon'ble Sir Saiyid Muhammad Fakhruddin Khan Bahadur (West Patna), Maulavi Khalilur Rahman (Gaya), Mr. Saiyid Muhammad Athar Hussain (Shahabad), Maulavi Hasan Jan (Muzaffarpur), Maulavi Shaikh Muhammad Shaft (Darbhanga), Khan Bahadur Saghir-ul-Haque (Saran), Maulavi Abdul Wadood (Champaran), Chaudhary Muhammad Nazrul Hassan (Bhagalpur), Maulavi Saiyid Muhammad Mehdi (Monghyr), Maulavi Haji Muhammad Bux Chaudhary (Purnea), Mr. Saiyid Moinuddin Mirza (Kishanganj), Maulavi Abdul Aziz

(Santhal Parganas), Maulavi Habibur Rahmad (Chotanagpur Division), Maulavi Shaikh Abdul Jalil (Orissa Division).

Landlords

Raja Bahadur Harihar Prasad Narayan Singh, O.B.E. (Patna Division), Babu Chandeshwar Prasad Narayan Sinha (Tirhut Division), Rai Bahadur Dalip Narayan Singh (Bhagalpur Division), Babu Birbar Narayan Chandra Narendra (Orissa Division), Babu Maheshwari Prasad (Chotanagpur Division).

Others

Maulavi Saiyid Muhammad Hafeez	Patna Division
Lt. Col. Daniel Douglas	European Constituency
Mr. W.H. Meyrick	Planting Constituency
Mr. Edward Smedly Teriton	Indian Mining Association
Babu Manindra Nath Mukherjee	Indian Mining Federation.[125]

The first session of the fourth Legislative Council was held at Patna between January and March, 1931. Altogether five bills were passed during the year of which the most important was the Motor Vehicle Act. Another important bill was passed to remove the defect of the original Opium Smoking Act, 1928.[126] Among the resolutions moved was one that related to the educational matter. The budget for the next year was passed.[127] The Legislative Council again met at Ranchi in August, 1931 and at Patna in February, 1932. Two important bills were passed during the period under review.[128] They were (i) the Patna University (Amendment) Bill which was introduced by the Hon'ble Minister for Education in February and passed in March, 1932. (ii) the Bihar and Orissa Municipal (Amendment) Bill, which had been introduced in the winter session of 1931 and referred to Select Committee,

was also passed in March, 1932.[129] The various non-official bills related to the appointment of District and Local Boards and regulation of religious endowments of both Muslims and Hindus.[130] The winter session of the Council met at Patna in February, 1932. The President of the Council, Sir John Sifton, was congratulated for his appointment as the Governor of the province.[131] The council approved the budget submitted by Raja Rajendra Narain Bhangedeo, the Finance Member of the Government.[132] Voting on budget grant gave occasion to discuss the Government policy towards the Civil Disobedience Movement. The debate was started by Srikrishna Prasad who moved a token cut-motion in the provision for the Executive Council. He criticised the Government policy in dealing with the movement started by the Indian National Congress with special reference to the cruel acts of the police.[133] He also raised the question of classification of political prisoners and the posting of additional police force in Barbigha and Tarapur in Monghyr District at the cost of the inhabitants of the area.[134] Some other members raised the questions of Primary Education and the working of the Public Works Department, and the Fisheries Department.[135]

The autumn session of the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council opened at Ranchi on the 29th August, 1932. At question time, the Government stated that the number of persons arrested in the province since the revival of Civil Disobedience movement was 9,624 and those convicted was 2,520. Those undergoing imprisonment numbered 2,542.[136] Only two important Bills were passed by the Legislative Council during this period. The one was Bihar and Orissa Local Self-Government Audit Bill and the other was Bihar and Orissa Public Safety Bill. In addition to those bills passed into law as many as nine bills were introduced in the council during this period.[137] Amongst the matters raised during the discussion the most important were the regulation of

working of Local Government; Cooperative Board and the question of establishment of Second Chamber in the province. The resolution regarding the Second Chamber was carried by 39 votes against 30. The budget was approved during February and March, 1933.[138] The session also considered the report on proposed boundary of the new Orissa province. The council adopted a resolution expressing dissatisfaction at the proposed boundary of Orissa. A considerable time of this session was devoted to the discussion of the White Paper proposals for Indian Constitutional Reforms. The official members did not take part in this debate.[139] Rai Bahadur Lakshmi Narain Sinha moved a resolution demanding full Provincial Autonomy with the responsibility at the centre without further delay.[140]

Another session of the council was held at Ranchi in August and September, 1933 and in Patna in February-March, 1934. In addition a special session was convened at Patna on the 1st December, 1933 for the purpose of electing a president in place of Babu Nirsu Narain Sinha who resigned because of his appointment as the member of the Executive Council. Mr. Rajendra Narayan Sinha was elected President defeating his rivals Sachchidanand Sinha and Khan Bahadur Shah Yahia. The election was approved by the Governor. Rai Bahadur Lakshmidhar Mahanti continued to be Deputy President.[141] In view of the conditions created by earthquake, the usual programme for winter session had to be curtailed. Only the voting on the budget was given prominence. The council passed the Bihar and Orissa Natural Calamity Bill which provided for the grant of simple and easy loans to the owners of buildings damaged and destroyed by earthquakes or other natural calamities. In March, 1934 another bill was passed to remove the difficulties of the Municipalities as the result of the earthquakes. Most of the time of the council was spent in discussing the problems created by earthquakes.[142]

There were during 1934-35, two by-elections to the Legislative Council of the province, one for the Patna Division Landholders seat and the other for the Patna Division Non-Mohammedan Urban seat. Both were uncontested. Eight by-elections were held during the year 1935-36 to fill vacancies in Indian Mining Association and the general constituencies. Of these, only one was contested. In view of the Provincial Autonomy, which was to come into force from 1st April, 1937, the life of the council was extended by His Excellency the Governor for a further period of one year with effect from the 1st January, 1936.[143]

Two sessions of Councils were held in 1934-35, one at Ranchi in September, 1934 and the other at Patna in February and March, 1935. The Legislation passed during this period were both important and varied. The Tenancy Law was again amended during the year, this time by the Bihar Tenancy (Amendment) Bill of 1935 which was introduced and referred to the Select Committee on the 25th February, 1935. After an interesting debate it was passed by the Council on 27th February, 1935. The Indian Forest Act, 1927 was passed by the Council on 5th September, 1934. The Bihar and Orissa Motor Vehicles Taxation Act was amended on the same date. The Patna University Act of 1917 was amended in September, 1934. On the same day, 18th September, the Council passed the Bihar Village Administration (Amendment) Bill, 1934 and the Darbhanga Improvement Bill, 1934. The Bihar and Orissa Nurses' Registration Bill. 1934 was passed on 25th February, 1935.[144] The Bihar and Orissa Cess (Amendment) Bill was passed on 18th September, 1934. The Bihar and Orissa (Central Provinces Village Sanitation) Amendment Bill, 1935 was introduced and passed. The Bihar and Orissa Municipal Act was twice amended during the year. By this measure the term of Municipal Boards was extended from three to five years.

Similarly the term of District Boards was also extended. The Bihar and Orissa Local Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1935 was passed on 27th March, 1935.[145]

Some other measures were also introduced during the period under review namely, the Bihar and Orissa Zamindars Protection Bill, two more Bihar and Orissa Municipal (Amendment) Bills, 1935 (Bill Nos. 4 and 8 of 1935), the Indian Forest Bihar and Orissa Local Self-Government (Amendment) Bill, 1935 (Bill No. 5 of 1935) and the Musalman Wakf Bill. Three other bills which had been introduced in 1933 lapsed.[146]

During the February and March, 1935 the budget was presented and passed. Perhaps the biased debate of the year occurred on the report of the Joint Parliament Committee published in November, 1934. The members expressed the view that the report, on the whole, was highly unsatisfactory and inadequate to meet the popular aspirations and full of unnecessary and undesirable safeguards, betraying a deep distress of Indian capacity and character. There was also the recognition of the fact by some members that the report marked a real advance on existing constitution. There was also the desire to make the best of the new constitution.[147]

The session 1935-36 was full of Legislative activities. Two important bills were passed during this year: (i) The Bihar and Orissa Cooperative Societies, (Amendment) Bill, 1935; and (ii) The Indian Forest (Bihar and Orissa Amendment) Bill, 1935 were passed by the Council on 6th September, 1935. The Bihar and Orissa Public Safety (Extending-Amending) Bill, 1936 designed to extend the period of duration of the Bihar and Orissa Public Safety Act, 1933 for a further period of five years was also passed. The Bihar and Orissa Village Administration (Amendment) Bill, 1936 was introduced on 10th January,

1936 and passed on the same day. The Bihar and Orissa Municipal (Amendment) Bill, 1935 was introduced in the autumn session of 1936 and was passed by the Council in the winter session of 1936.[148]

Ten other bills were introduced in the Legislative Council during the year but could not be passed.[149]

The report of the Select Committee which had been appointed to report on the Bihar and Orissa Musalman Wakf Bill, 1933 about two years ago, was submitted to the Council on 3rd September, 1935 and was considered on 13th of January, 1936 but it was ultimately rejected.[150] To prevent their lapse, motions for the continuance of the same Bills were adopted by the Council on 15th January, 1936.[151]

Almost all the resolutions moved during this period were non-political in nature. As usual official resolutions were carried and the budget was passed in the form and manner desired by the Government. On March 28, 1936 the President of the Council bade farewell to the Orissa members of the Legislative Council before reading out the order of prorogation of the Council.[152]

There were during 1936-37 three by-elections. The Orissa Division now ceased to be part of constituency of the Bihar Legislative Council. Consequently, Rai Bahadur Lakshmidhar Mahanti who belonged to Orissa ceased to be the Deputy President. In his place Maulavi Saiyed Md. Hafiz was duly elected Deputy President.[153]

On 21st November, 1936 His Excellency addressed the Legislative Council at Patna in the last sitting of the session and prorogued the session. In the course of his farewell address, His Excellency reviewed the coming constitutional changes and struck an optimistic note about the future.[154]

Thus an analysis and evolution of the working of Legislative Council under the Act of 1919 showed that most

of the deliberations and discussions of the Council were pertaining to non-political issues like education, agriculture and relief. As usual the budget presented by the Government was passed in the form and manner desired by the Government. The official members always dominated the scene. It was true that the President and the Deputy President were Indians, but they also represented and reflected official views. By and large the Legislative Council of the Province worked under the same limitations and restrictions as the legislatures of the other provinces of India. The representative character of non-official members was largely feudal in nature. The problem of masses, workers, agricultural labour and poor farmers hardly attracted the attention. The great masses of Bihar were not represented in the council at all.

THE JUDICIARY

The High Court had been established at Patna as the head of the Provincial Judiciary in March, 1916. The High Court started to function since 29th April 1916 under the Chief Justice Sir Edward Maynard Des Champa Chemier. Judges and other categories of staff were appointed in the newly established Patna High Court. Since the opening of the Patna High Court in 1916, till 1919 some vacancies occurred in the offices of the judges including the Chief Justice. The vacant posts for the time being were filled by the local Government until permanent incumbents were appointed by the Governor.

The High Court had functioned as a keeper of records too. It had original and appellate jurisdiction and had power of superintendence and supervisor over the subordinate courts. Under the Act of 1919 the High Court was reorganised.

The High Court referred to in this Act was the High Court of judicature for the time being established in British

India by letters patent. Each High Court consisted of a Chief Justice and as many other judges as His Majesty might think fit to appoint.[155]

Tenure of Judges of a High Court: 1. Every judge of a High Court had his office during His Majesty's pleasure.[156]

Precedence of Judges of a High Court: 1. The Chief Justice of a High Court had rank and precedence before the other judges of the same court. 2 All the other judges of a High Court had rank and precedence according to the seniority of their appointment, unless otherwise provided in their patents.[157]

Powers of High Courts with respect to subordinates: The High Court had power over all the courts, subject to its appellate jurisdiction to: (a) call for returns, (b) direct the transfer of any suit or appeal from any such court to any other court of equal or superior jurisdiction, (c) make and issue general rules and prescribe forms for regulating the practice and proceedings of such courts, (d) prescribe forms in which books, entries and accounts were kept by the officers of any courts, and (e) settle tables of fees to be allowed to the sherifs, attorneys and all clerks and officers of courts.[158]

The Governor General-in-Council had power to transfer any territory or place from the jurisdiction of one High Court to another and to exercise jurisdiction over any British subject residing out of British India. Any rule or order made under this power was to be transmitted to the Secretary of State and it was subject to disallowance by His Majesty.[159]

Exemption from jurisdiction of the High Court: The Governor-General, each Governor and each of the members of the Executive Council of the Governor-General and a Minister appointed under this Act of 1919 could not be subject to the original jurisdiction of any High Court by

reason of anything counselled, ordered or done by any of them in his public capacity only, nor be liable to be arrested or imprisoned in any suit or proceeding in any High Court acting in the exercise of its original jurisdiction, or be subject to the original criminal jurisdiction of any High Court in respect of any offence not being treason or felony. The exemption under this section from liability to arrest and imprisonment also extended to the Chief Justice and other judges of the several High Courts.[160]

The High Court of Bihar and Orissa was organised under this Act. As the High Court had been functioning since 1916 in the province not much change was brought about in its organisation and functions of the court.

The sources of income for the court were fines, fees, court fees, stamp receipts and miscellaneous receipts. The amount of income was spent on various heads of expenditure, *e.g.*, salaries of judicial officers, permanent and temporary copying establishments and contingency.[161]

The High Court had mainly two jurisdictions, Criminal Administration of Justice and the Civil Administration of Justice. Over them the High Court had its original and appellate jurisdiction.[162]

Criminal Administration of Justice: The Criminal administration of justice in Bihar and Orissa was administered by the High Court, Courts of Sessions Judges and other courts represented by various classes of magistrates.[163]

Civil Justice: In respect of civil justice the High Court of Patna exercised appellate, revisional, administrative and other jurisdictions. Under the High Court there were the District and Additional Judges (who exercised the functions of sessions and additional sessions), Judges as well as Subordinate Judges and the Munsifs. The jurisdiction of a District Judge or a Subordinate Judge

extended to all original suits cognizable by the civil courts.[164]

CHIEF JUSTICE

Patna High Court had the following distinguished Chief Justices from 1917 to 1935.

(1) Sir Thomas Fredrick Dawson Miller, Kt., Kc., K.C.I.E., 1917-28

(2) Sir Courtney Terrell, Kt. (1928-38)

At the time of the promulgation of the Act of 1919 the following Justices occupied the bench.

(1) Hon'ble B.K. Mallick, (2) Hon'ble F.R. Roe, (3) Hon'ble C. Atkinson (died on 16. 11. 1919), (4) Hon'bla Jawala Prasad, (5) Hon'ble P.C. Manuk (vacated his seat on 11.2.1919), (6) Hon'ble P.R. Das, (7) Hon'ble L. C. Adami, (8) Hon'ble H. Foster, and (9) Hon'ble S. Sultan Ahmad.

However, frequent changes occurred in the composition of the High Court of the province from time to time.[165]

Besides the permanent personnel of the High Court, the two temporary posts of Additional Judges were sanctioned with effect from 26th October, 1934 and 8th December, 1935. They were extended up to the beginning of vacation of 1937.[166]

The High Court of the province organised under the Act of 1919 continued to function till the provisions of the Act of 1935 relating to the provincial judiciary came into force.

The High Court of Patna decided some of the very important cases of national importance. It is difficult to select important cases decided by the Patna High Court. To narrate them within a limited space is even more difficult.

One of the most sensational cases which produced sharp public reaction not only in Bihar but throughout India was The King 'Emperor *vs.* Vidyasagar Pandey and others, popularly known as the Barh Sati Case.[167] This case related to the Sati of a girl named Sampati Kuer of about 20 years age in November, 1927. When she became widow she was forced to burn herself on the funeral pyre. The public tried to check it. There was clash between the crowd accompanying Sampati Kuer and the police. There were different versions of the case.[168] Sixteen persons were charged with being members of an unlawful assembly to aid and abet the suicide of Sampati and were tried by Mr. T. Luby, Sessions Judge of Patna, with the aid of a jury comprising five persons, three of whom were renowned professors of Patna, namely, Sarvashri A.T. Chatterjee, H. K. Ganguly and G.P. Hazari. The Jury passed a unanimous verdict of 'not guilty'. The Sessions Judge declined to accept this verdict and made a reference to the High Court where the case was heard by Chief Justice Courtney Terrell and Justice Adami. The Hon'ble Judges did not believe the story of a miraculous fire and expressed the view that the fire on the funeral pyre was caused by some apparatus kept in the left hand of the widow which was concealed in her clothes. All the accused were convicted and sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for periods varying from one year to ten years.

The judgement of the High Court evoked severe criticism and a series of articles were published in the *Searchlight,* Patna, criticising the same.[169]

Another important case was the *Searchlight* contempt case of 1928. This case related to the contempt of Court committed by the editor and staff of the *Searchlight* for critising the judgement of Patna High Court in the Barh Sati Case.[170]

The contempt case aroused countrywide interest and in addition to the galaxy of the lawyers from the Patna

High Court Bar, leading lawyers from all over the country including Pandit Motilal Nehru, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Sarat Chandra Bose appeared voluntarily on behalf of the contempters. The Crown was represented by Sir Sultan Ahmad. The case was heard by a Bench of five Judges consisting of Chief Justice Courtney Terrell, and Justices Adami, Ross, Kulwant Sahay and Fazl Ali. The final outcome of the case was that Shri Murli Manohar Prasad, Editor, was sentenced to pay a fine of Rs. 500 before 2 O'clock on the day the judgement was pronounced, in default of which he was to be confined to Patna Jail till the fine was paid. The remaining accused persons, *viz.,* the Manager, the Company and its Directors were let off with a warning that any repetition of the offence would be met with far severer consequences.[171]

The third most interesting case was Rajgir Kund case of 1929. It related to the right of the Muslims of Rajgir to bathe in the water of Septadhar Kund at Rajgir and to utilise its water for drinking purposes. The Hindus opposed it on the ground that the kunds at Rajgir were from time immemorial looked upon by the Hindus as of great sanctity and as a sacred place of Tirtha of the Hindus.[172]

They also asserted that the Hindus were the owners and proprietors of the several kinds including the Saptadhara and that the local Pandas were the custodians of the same on behalf of the Hindu public.[173]

The case was originally heard by the court of the Subordinate Judge of Patna in 1929 and on appeal by the District Judge of Patna in 1933. The claim of the Muslims was rejected by both the courts. When the case went to the High Court in 1933 the Chief Justice Sir Courtney Terrell and Justice James upheld the decision of the lower courts. The case attracted wide attention because of its communal nature.

The other important case was of Gouri Shanker and others *vs.* The Collector of Muzaffarpur. In this case the

question of independence of the High Court was raised. The High Court did not like the interference of the Executive authorities of Muzaffarpur in this case. Sir John Dawson Miller, the then Chief Justice, protested on his own behalf as well as on behalf of all the other Hon'ble Judges against the unconstitutional interferences with the independence of the Highest Court of Justice. The Local Government eventually climbed down. The matter, however, did not rest there. A question was raised in the Provincial Legislative Council. A resolution was carried by 41 votes against 27 reducing the grant in the Budget of the Executive under the head "Judicial Administration" by Rs. 100 which amounted to a vote of censure upon the Executive Government for what was regarded by the Councillors as interference with the Judicial Administration in Bihar.[174]

Thus, many important cases were decided by the Patna High Court, which played an important role in the Judicial administration of the province.

A review of the working of the Provincial administration of the province under the Act of 1919 indicates that the British Government made half-hearted attempt to introduce Provincial Autonomy under the system of the so-called diarchy. The Governor continued to be the centre of authority and real power. The Ministers were helpless in managing the transferred subjects, because of the concentration of power in the hands of the Governor and the civil servants. The people of the province were not satisfied with the working of Provincial Autonomy. They were also not happy with the working of the provincial Government. It was declared that with regard to the reserved subjects ministers had no voice. Even in case of transferred subjects the powers of the Ministers were so limited that they could not discharge their duties well. As some British scholars remarked, the administration was a seamless garment which could not be divided. The division of the subject proved very complicated

and obstructive.[175] The working of the Legislative Council of the Province also showed that the provincial legislature was helpless in the matter of finance. The control of the Department of Finance over legislation also reduced the effectiveness of the provincial legislature. But the Indian members of the Legislative Council displayed remarkable ability and leadership in presenting the grievances of the people before the legislative body. The members took a keen and active part in the proceedings of the Legislative Council. This was evident by the number of questions asked, the number of the resolutions introduced and the number of amendments to various official bills proposed by the members of the Council. There used to be lively and interesting discussions on matters like agriculture, education, local self-government and the repressive policy of government against those who were fighting for freedom. But the official members dominated the scene. The representative character of the Council was largely fluid in character. The limited right of franchise deprived common people of adequate representation. Consequently the legislative council served the interests of the feudal and upper class only. The High Court organised under this Act, however, worked satisfactorily.

The experiment continued for sixteen years. But right from its infancy it had to face the opposition of most important political party of the time, the Indian National Congress. The latter contested the elections, firmly determined to wreck the constitution from within rather than work it. The diarchy sufferred from many defects. The division of government into two water-tight compartments, each completely independent of the other, one popular and elective in origin and the other official and non-elective reflected the inherent defect of diarchy. It was criticised by people like Sachchidanand Sinha who had the opportunity of seeing from within the working of the diarchy in Bihar and Orissa for a period of more than five years. He had worked as President of the Legislative Council, as well as

Finance Member during the term of office of four Governors. Sinha had prepared a fairly long paper on *Diarchy in Theory and Practice.* He read it at the East India Association, London on October 3, 1927. In this paper he had conclusively shown that diarchy had very few merits, if any, while its demerits were unfortunately so numerous as to render it unworkable and practically useless as a means of qualifying the Indians to fit themselves "for gradual development of self-governing institution with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government in British India".[176]

There was also a haphazard division of subjects. The real power was with the Governor and not with the Minister. The Governor interfered in all sorts of matters. There was no harmony between the civil servants and the Ministers. Finance was in the hands of the Executive Councillor. He was always anxious that reserved department got all the money required before other departments got what they wanted. The Indian Ministers Khan Bahadur Syed Mohammad Fakhruddin and Madhusudan Das worked under great difficulties. Madhusudan Das as Minister for Local Self-Government was replaced by Ganesh Dutta Singh in 1923. Fakhruddin as Minister for Education was replaced by Khan Bahadur Saiyed Muhammad Hussain in 1933 after whom Saiyed Abdul Aziz joined as Minister for Education. Some of the Ministers under the transferred subjects were overcome by the appointment of an Indian, Dr. Sachchidanand Sinha as the Finance Member of the Executive Council. The communal composition of the Legislative Council also created conflicts. But the provincial Government under the Act of 1919 might have worked had it got the cooperation of the Indian National Congress. Constant friction both within and outside the Government made it unworkable. Consequently the Government of India in 1935 abolished the diarchy and attempted to introduce a responsible Government in the province.

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3

Champaran and the Civil Disobedience Movement, 1930-34

Nineteen-thirty was a momentous year in the history of the Indian nationalist movement. It opened with a pledge by the Indian people to fight for "Complete Independence" *(Purna Swaraj)* instead of "Dominion status" under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. In this year the Indian National Congress organised the Civil Disobedience Movement in pursuance of the resolution passed at its Lahore Session in December 1929. By another resolution the attainment of 'Purna Swaraj' (Complete Independence) was declared to be the chief objective of the Congress. It was also decided to adopt this resolution in public meetings throughout the country on the 26th January 1930 and that day was declared as Independence Day.[1]

Champaran played an important part in the Salt Satyagraha and in the Civil Disobedience movements which were started by Mahatma Gandhi early in 1930. It is significant to note that all sections of the people of the district of Champaran were inspired by national feelings and they warmly responded to the clarian call Mahatma Gandhi.[2]

In pursuance of the resolution of the Lahore Session of the Indian National Congress, Rajendra Prasad and some others issued a joint communique on 20th January, 1930

on behalf of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee, indicating the directives of the celebration of the "Independence Day" on coming 26th January, 1930.[3]

On the 26th January, 1930, 'Independence Day' was celebrated in a remarkable manner. There was "spontaneous demonstration" everywhere in the country "in which hundreds of thousands of villages instinctively participated". Thousands of people took the pledge of independence with great solemnity. The students also joined it in large numbers and many municipal buildings all-over India, including Champaran, hoisted the National Flag on the Independence Day.[4]

But the British authorities in India were not sitting idle. They were closely watching the tenor of political development after the Lahore Session of the Indian National Congress. When the Provincial Congress Committee issued directives to the different District Congress Committee, the authorities in Bihar also took appropriate steps on the 26th January, 1930 in order to counteract the move of the Congress workers regarding the celebration of 'Independence Day'. The Bihar Government issued a letter to all the Divisional Commissioners on the 21st January 1930 containing there in the following guidelines for the District Magistrates and Superintendents of Police:[5]

"There should be no general prohibition which might play into the hands of extremists anxious to pose in public as martyrs oppressed by a tyrannous government. Nor is it desirable that an excuse should be given to Congressmen to say that they are persecuted for holding political opinion. Meetings held for the purpose of giving expressions to the idea of 'Independence' may be regarded as a safety valve for discharging superfluous steam. Government desire, therefore, that there should be no avoidable clash, but that toleration to avoid this should not extend a reasonable point. Thus in regard to licences these need not be granted

if the object of the meeting is explained by the organisers in clearly seditious terms which they refuse to alter. Thus for example a procession to end in a meeting to explain the message of congress should not be treated as specifically seditious, but a procession to celebrate the severance of the British connection should be so regarded."

"In view of the Congress 'Independence' resolution, slogans such as 'Long Live Revolution' and of course. 'Down with the British Raj' or 'Down with the Union Jack' should be treated as breaches of the conditions of the licence. On the other hand, cries which are not definitely seditious, such as 'Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai' or even 'Up with Independence' or 'Down with Imperialism', which convey very little meaning, would be better ignored unless the procession is getting out of hand and riotous generally."

"As the Government of India will presumably wish to know immediately how Independence Day passes off in the province, any incident of importance should be reported direct by District Magistrates at once by telegram in cipher or enclair according to their discretion. If no report is received by midday on the 27th, it will be assumed that there is nothing to report."[6]

The people of Champaran fully supported the Civil Disobedience movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi in 1930. It was announced on beat of drums on the 25th January, 1930 by the Government that those who would take part in any procession without licence would be prosecuted. In spite of this order a procession of about 3 hundred people with National Flag and Songs started from Sathi (Champaran) at 3 p.m. and paraded the whole town. Much enthusiasm was noticed. At about 4 p.m. procession arrived at the place from where it had started and a meeting was held under the Presidentship of Murlidhar Khetan, Secretary of the Local Congress Committee. The mandate of the Congress was read out in the meeting and

was duly adopted by all assembled there. The meeting dispersed with shouts of "Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai", "Bande Mataram" and 'Jawaharla Nehru Ki Jai".[7]

12th March was fittingly observed in Bettiah town of Champaran district. Since the dawn of the day *Nagarkirtan* by Congress volunteers was observed. At 5 p.m. a largely attended public meeting was held under the Presidentship of Harivans Sahay. Bipin Bihari Verma, President, District Congress Committee, in an impassioned speech dwelt on the sacred nature of our fight and circumstances leading to Satyagrah by Mahatmajee. A large number of volunteers were enlisted. Prayers were offered for the success of the fight.[8] The following is the list of Champaran District Congress Committee for the week ending March 31st:

(1) Number of Congress volunteers enrolled was 60. Number of Congress Committee organised was 5; Number of villages visited for boycott work was 80; Average number of boycott by volunteers at work during the week was 42; Number of houses visited by boycott meetings and processions was 15; Number of meetings of Foreign Cloth Burning Committee was 9; Khadi sold by Congress Committee was worth Rs. 432; Number of new Charkhas set in motion was 8; Response made by foreign cloth dealers was 4; the sale of Khadi and Swadeshi was increasing and 192 persons had signed on F.C.B. pledge, volunteers enrolled were 1829. The National Flag Salutation was observed at various places on the 31st March.[9]

The Working Committee of All India Congress Committee met at Sabarmati from February 14 to 16, 1930, and authorised Mahatma Gandhi to start Civil Disobedience movement whenever he so desired. Mahatma Gandhi decided to launch Satyagraha compaign by manufacturing salt at Dandi, a village in Gujarat, which was about 200 miles from Sabarmati.[10]

On March 12, 1930 Mahatma Gandhi with seventy-five male and female workers left Sabarmati Ashram on foot and reached the sea at Dandi on 5th April.[11]

The All India Congress Committee met at Ahmedabad on March 21, 1930. It endorsed the resolution of the Working Committee and also expressed the hope that "the whole country will respond to the action taken by Gandhi" and authorised "the Provincial Congress Committee to organize and undertake such Civil Disobedience as to them may seen proper and in the manner that may appear to them to be most suitable."[12]

On 30th March, 1930, the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee met at Sadaquat Ashram, Patna, under the Presidentship of Rajendra Prasad, to devise ways and means for the implementation of the resolution passed in the meeting of the Congress Committee at Ahmedabad on March 21, 1930. It was unanimously decided that as soon as Mahatma Gandhi was asserted or if he issued any signal to start Civil Disobedience Movement, the Provincial Congress at once respond to it and the movement be started. It is rather significant that the two districts that were given priority one others for starting the movement was Champaran and Saran in the whole of the province of Bihar.[13]

On 31st March, 1930, Bihar was visited by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, President of the Indian National Congress, and his wife Mrs. Kamla Nehru. He also found the Champaran district and addressed several meetings.[14]

In the morning of the 5th April, 1930 an order was issued by the Provincial Congress Committee to the Champaran district Sardar Bipin Bihari Verma, to march for the breach of salt law.[15] The whole town was electrified and men in numbers began to enquire of the actions to be taken up. On beat of drums a meeting was announced and held in the Congress Maidan, under the Presidentship of Ram Dayal Prasad Sahu. In the meeting it was announced

formally that the district Sardar would march for the breach of salt law the next evening (6th April) at 5.30 p.m. people started arranging to decorate the whole town in order to give the Sardar a hearty send off. Pandit Ramchandra Dwivedi, Pt. Vedabratji, Pt. Satyabrat and Swami Sivanand who were here in connection with local Arya Samaj Anniversary delivered very touching and encouraging speeches exhorting the people to fight bravely the battle of freedom. Many students were also enrolled themselves as volunteers. On the 6th April, 1930, the whole town looks over crowded with people who came from nearby villages and the local people began to decorate their houses bearing their normal work. All persons and almost all platforms echoed the name of the great Gandhi. The whole day proceeding of the *Arya Samaj Utswa* was marked with enthusiasm and every hook and corner of the town was seen receiving the messages of Mahatma Gandhi.[16]

Thereafter an ultimatum was sent to the District Magistrate at 10.30 a.m. on 6th April, 1930, signed by 'Sardar' Bipin Bihari Verma. An unprecedented situation was witnessed at Motihari and people vied with each other in joining the batch which was destined to be the first batch of Champaran. The Sardar left this place just at 3.30 p.m. and paraded the whole town followed by a very large numbers of volunteers and people.[17] On the way he and his colleagues were received most cordially by the public showed them *Arti,* garlanded them, fed them, presented purses to them. Old men kissed them, patted their back and did what ever they could do. Scenes were so touching that tears of joy gushed forth from innumerable eyes. In the mean time, Rajendra Prasad joined the procession and the whole thing received a marvellous impetus. The procession reached the Congress Maidan and a meeting numbering about 10 thousand people was held. Addresses on behalf of the student's community and Marwari community were presented to the 'Sardar'. The Marwari

community presented a purse of Rs. 201. Rajendra Prasad then spoke for a few minutes thanking the people of Champaran and asking them to fight to the finish.[18]

Prajapati Mishra introduced all the volunteers who were present there. At last 'Sardar' Bipin Bihari Verma spoke a few words in a very touching language. He said that the fight was a fight to the finish and it must continue till the last drop of blood remained in their veins and the last pie in their pocket. He hoped that the movement in Champaran would not die for want of men and women. He asked all specially the youngmen to remain non-violent. Then prayers were offered to God led by Pandit Vedabrat Sharma who read out the Gita and all those present repeated the same. Then the 'Sardar' with his batch of volunteers marched off to Jogapatti in the Bettiah sub-division to break the salt law. The last scene was very touching when the Sardar fell down on the feet of Rajendra Prasad to invoke his blessing and Rajendra Prasad patted him on his back. All were quite happy. The District Magistrate was standing on horse-back near the meeting.[19]

The following were the volunteers[20] of the meeting.

1. Bipin Bihari Verma—Bar-at Law, Chairman, Champaran District Board, President District Congress Committee.
2. Ganesh Prasad Sahu—Vice-Chairman, Motihari Municipality.
3. Shivanandan Ram—Bettiah
4. Jamuoa Ram, (20 years)—a Mochi, Motihari.
5. Bangi Ram, Bettiah.
6. Tara Prasad Verma S/o Harbansh Sahay—Ex-M.L.C.
7. Rambarana—a Nonia.
8. Devaki—a Nonia.
9. Rambaran.

10. Mattau Raut.
11. Hakim Mia.
12. Shivdhari Pandey—President of Sub-divisional Congress Committee.
13. Ram Sundar Tripathi—Office Worker of the D.C.C., Motihari.

The party which had set for Jogapatti to break Salt Law reached the village Chailaha 3 miles off Motihari. The villagers received them most cordially. The village was clean and the villagers seemed very busy in making the village ready to listen to the party and working to present purse to them. The party them halted at Semara at the night of the 6th April, 1930.[21] The people of Semara presented a purse of Rs. 40 to Satyagrah Dal. On the 7th April the party halted at Phulwaria at the night. They were splendidly received and addresses were presented to them on behalf of the village and the Hindi Library, Phulwaria. The volunteers of the party were garlanded and a purse of Rs. 41 was presented to Sardar Bipin Bihari Verma. He spoke everywhere in the meetings, suggesting people to remain non-violent till the end and till the great mission of Mahatma Gandhi—the mission of the liberation of India is not fulfilled.

In the mean time an armed police force had been advanced to Bettiah to be stationed at Jogapatti where the salt law had to be violated. More batches of police force were despatched thereafter. But the volunteers were being enrolled. It is significant to note that even orthodox Brahmanas garlanded all the volunteers including a Mochi and marked Tilak on their front head. On this occasion Sardar Bipin Bihari Verma impressed upon the Satyagrahis and others present there to remain nonviolent and peaceful at all costs. He advised them to die in honour of the National flag. He said: "We shall be parting within a few hours. No body knows who will remain outside to serve

the nation. He the Almighty will crown us with victory. Blessed be our Motherland."[22]

The first batch of seven volunteers under Sardar Bipin Bihari Verma broke the salt law first. An ailing Mohamadan of Kawlapura aged about 80 years came to bless the 'Sardar' from a place far off from there. It was a very pathetic scene to witness. Amidst a very encouraging scene of men, women, children young and old, numbering about 5 thousand present, the 'Sardar' stood and spoke—while leaving that place to reach the site of salt law breaking. He said that he would go to break the law positively at 10 A.M. Most touching scene was witnessed when women aged 80 and 90 years came to the Sardar with one, two and three Paises to present to the Sardar. The 'Sardar' received blessings from all present. He anticipated his arrest within a few hours and would go to Jail. Some of his friends would also go to jail. All, he hoped, would sink all differences and work for the common cause and salvation of the people. In case of his arrest he suggested all of manufacture—salt anywhere and everywhere possible. He asked them to remain quite peaceful even at the point of gravest provocation and all physical difficulties. He said that poor women came to him with hard-earned money to present to him. He exhorted the people to be non-violent. According to him after his arrest, the next batch of volunteers with Vishwanath Sinha and others as arranged would go and break the salt law.[23]

At 9.50 sharp the party started to break the salt law. There were eight Satyagrahis including 'Sardar' Bipin Bihari Verma on the spot they appeared at 9.55 A.M. From before there were the Superintendent of Police, Mr. Hamid, the S.D.O., Bettiah, Mr. Sharling, and two police sub-inspectors and one inspector Mr. Khan, Mr. Yunus and Mr. Majid respectively and 10 constables present there. As soon as the party reached the spot, 'Sardar' Bipin Bihari after

shouting "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" punctually at 10 a.m. and Ganesh Prasad Sahu and Shivadhari Pandey began to boil the saline water. The S.P. and other officers of the police came forward from a distance of 20 yards where they were standing. The following conversations took place between 'Sardar' Bipin Bihari Verma and the S.P.:[24]

S.P.—What are you doing Bipin ?

Sardar—I am going to prepare salt.

S.P.—Have you mixed Gur with water ?

Sardar—No. It is pure saline water.

S.P.—I wish, you had better prepared it in cold water.

Sardar—Everything can be done any time when madness for the freedom of the country comes.

S.P.—I can tell you that if it were removed my trouble will be removed.

Sardar—We are ourselves going to be removed now.

S.P.—You have to tolerate, Bipin.

Sardar—Well, I am going to do my duty and you and Mr. Sharling (he was present all along) will do your duty.

S.P.—Are you the leader?

Sardar—Yes.

S.P.—Then, I arrest you, Ganesh Prasad Sahu and Shivadhari Pandey.

These three persons then surrendered and the rest five continued to manufacture salt. The constables and sub-inspector stepped in and began to break the *Chulha*[25] and other utensils with them. But the volunteers could not brought other set of materials for continued their works.

The three arrested persons were taken to the camp of Nawalpur at a distance of 2 miles. They were on trial in the court of Mr. Pushkar Thakur, Deputy Magistrate, deputed

on special duty. While the trial was going on, Rajendra Prasad, Mathura Prasad and Prof. Kriplani reached there.[26]

The hearing in the court started according to the charges framed against Bipin Bihari Verma.' The charges against Bipin Bihari Verma was levelled under Sections 177 I.P.C. and 9 of Salt Act. But the court discussed the matter in details and it observed that he could not charged under both the sections, because as per Section 9 of the Salt Act the Crime could have been committeed by 10 or more than 10 persons whereas in this case there were only eight persons. However, the charges under Section 177 I.P.C. still stood. The court examined the prosecution under this section and on 17th April, 1930, delivered judgment.[27]

The prosecution charge was withdrawn which was levelled under Section 9 of the Salt Act. Bipin Bihari Verma was sentenced to one year's simple imprisonment, Shivadhari Pandey and Ganesh Sahu to six month's simple imprisonment. All were declared by the court as 'A' class political prisoners and were sent to Motihari Jail where a large number of people were waiting to their *Darshan.* In the night Prof. Kriplani and Rajendra Prasad delivered speeches and the salt was sold.[28]

The following Satyagrahis[29] were sentenced from the following centres in the district of Champaran.

1. Piprahia Centre	(1) Bipin Bihari Verma—1 Year.
	(2) Shivadhari Pandey—6 months
	(3) Ganesh Prasad Sahu—6 months
2. Basman Centre	(1) Ramlal—6 months simple imprisonment.
—do—	(2) Sita Ram Sahu—6 months simple imprisonment.
3. Dhaka Centre	Ramautar Sinha—6 months simple imprisonment.

4. Dhekaha Centre	Ramdayal Prasad Sahu—6 months simple imprisonment.
5. Rajapur Centre	(1) Jamuna Prasad—6 months simple imprisonment.
	(2) Ramlochan Sinha—6 months simple imprisonment.
	(3) Lal Bahadur Sinha—6 months simple imprisonment.
6. Phulwaria Centre	(1) Baijnath Mishra—6 months simple imprisonment.
	(2) Lakshmi Jha—6 months simple imprisonment.
7. Malahi Centre	Ramarishi Deva—6 months simple imprisonment.

Satyagraha movement was also going on at several places, such as, Saratta, Penchara, Serauna, Gambharia, Baikunthwa, Bettiah town, Ranipur, Bagahi, Mangalpur, Amba and Bibi Bankatwa.[30]

It was expected to manufacture salt in Jogapatti at 42 places and in Bettiah town proper at 100 places and also at the places where arrest had been made.[31]

Salt was sold by the cost at Rs. 80-14-6 on the 18th April, the day on which the salt law was breaked. In reaction this *hartal* (strike) was observed at Motihari. Since there was Hindu-Muslim riot at Bettiah the *hartal* could not be observed in the matter as it was expected. The repression work of the Government in Champaran was going on in full swing. The following workers were arrested.[32]

1. Chandrika Prasad	Bettiah Town.
2. Rup Shah	Dhanaha P.S.
3. Bhola Shukla	" "
4. Dip Rout	" "

5. Brahma Gopal Mishra	" "
6. Sarswati Mishra	" "
7. Dalsingarjee Mahto	" "
8. Bharath Rau	Lauria P.S.
9. Mahadeo Prasad	Bagaha P.S.
10. Babunandan Tiwary	" "
11. Amala Prasad (6 months R.I.)	Govindganj P.S.
12. Pandit Gauri Shankar Pandey (6 months R.I.)	Govindganj P.S.
13. Ramjas Sinha (6 months R.I.)	" "

Besides these persons, Jagdish Shukul was arrested by the S.I, of Police, Majhaulia and was released after two hours.[33] In the mean time Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was arrested. His arrest further embittered the feeling of the people of Bihar. It also brought about intensification of the Satyagrah movement which is evident from the circular letter issued by Rajendra Prasad, President of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee:[34]

"It is time now that Satyagraha against the salt law should be given the form of a mass movement. It is therefore, left within the direction of every district to begin and carry on Satyagraha. And to make it a mass movement, they are to conduct it in accordance with the following direction :

(a) Satyagraba should be launched in as many villages as possible.

(b) Due attention should be paid to the refinement of salt as much as possible in order to make it fit for human consumption. In this connection the help of experts must be obtained. Not the violation of the law only but also the manufacture of eatable salt should be important consideration.

(c) Whatever quantity of salt is manufactured it should be sold to the poor in the villages at the lowest possible rate, while a little quantity of it may be auctioned in cities to obtain some money for conducting the Satyagraha movement.

(d) Whoever has enrolled himself in the Satyagraha army should be directed in the first instance to manufacture salt in his own place provided there are facilities for it, and in case of want of such facilities he should be asked to go to this place where they are available.

(e) The general public should be told that they should take up manufacture of salt after having throughly understood the salt law and know fully the consequences that are likely to follow it break.

(f) Whenever necessary the *Satyagrahis* may employ 'Noniya' even on wages according to their need, and manufacture salt. But this should be resorted to only where the Satyagrahis are unable to manufacture salt themselves.

(g) Pamphlets containing the above direction should be freely distributed in the villages.[36]

The above directives of Rajendra Prasad gave further impetus to the people of Bihar particularly Champaran.

By now several persons of Champaran had been arrested. As a mark of protest against leader's arrest spontaneous *hartals* were observed in Champaran district. On the 17th April, Harbans Sabay, ex-M.L.C., and Jai Narain Prasad were arrested and sentenced to one year's simple imprisonment each. Sita Saran and Bishwanath Sinha and fourteen other persons were also arrested soon. But repression failed to check the progress of the *Satyagraha,* and salt began to be manufactured on a mass

scale in numerous villages of that area. By the 19th April it was being manufactured at 550 places engaging 2000 volunteers.[36] Thus Satyagraha continued in whole Champaran district.

ARREST OF MAHATMA GANDHI AND ITS EFFECT IN CHAMPARAN

Now the Government of India was frightened by the spontaneous manifestation of the national upsverge of the Indian people. The Salt Satyagraha had risen the national sentiment of the people throughout India. Hence, on the 4th May, 1930, the Government decided to arrest Mahatma Gandhi and finally Mahatma Gandhi was arrested on the same day. But the arrest of Mahatma Gandhi arose spontaneous protest throughout the length and breadth of the country. There was a storm over the land marked by *hartals* and strikes from one part of it to the other. In Bihar, there was *hartals* in district as well as sub-divisional headquarters. In Champaran, students, including many of the schools, joined in the strikes and demonstrations at all places.[37] On the 7th May a meeting for students was held at Motihari. Be high observed a complete *hartal* on that day. Meetings were organised there in which the students took prominent part, and resolutions were passed for boycott of foreign cloths, boycott of law courts and picketing of liquor shops. At Narkatiaganj and Sugauli, strikes were successfully organised with active participation of the students.[38]

Here, it will not be out of place to mention that the propagations of Satyagraha movement was against the sale of toddy and liquor in any form. They were opposed to the idea of sale intoxicated goods. Consequently on 14th May, 1930, Sakal Mishra of Dhekaha (Motihari P.S.) was working in Dhaka side returned to his village and collected 20 volunteers with the help of Ganga Teli and Ganpat

Mahto damaged the fruits and labnis of 6 palm trees in Kolu Tola, Dhekaha. The volunteers attempted to cut the bals of palm trees of a toddy vender named Sheonandan Dusadh at Dhekaha.[39]

On 15th May, 1930, some villagers of Misroulia destroyed road near Shikarganj and some of the owners of palm trees had got the blades of their trees cut by the volunteers. As a result of picketing against toddy shop at Laherwa Bazar by the teachers and students of L.P. School of Shikarganj the venders had stopped selling toddy.[40]

On 17th May, 1930, Ramlakhan Tatwa of Lahan came to Dhaka police station and reported that while he was sitting at his liquor and toddy shops, some 50 to 60 men wearing Gandhi caps with *lathis* in their hand and shouting "Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai" came from the west on the District Board road. They broke up the toddy pots and suggested him to do some other works, then they went away towards Gandhi Ashram. A Pasi named Sheo Das had gone to accumulate palm juice. He went away other place after seeing a large number of volunteers who came to stop his toddy work. The volunteers broke the toddy pots into pieces. Pasis in general had give up their profession. They snatched away their *Hasuli* and *Pasuli* and went away towards the east threatening the Pasis in general to give up their own toddy earlier, there had been some altercations between Sheo Das and Pujari of Rameshwar Singh on the subject of giving up sale of toddy and that was the reason, the volunteers had treated him in such a way. The Pujari was cook of the Ashram as well as a volunteer.[41]

A case U/S 147/379 I.P.C. was instituted by the officer-incharge of the Dhaka police station.[42] Sheo Das identified accused namely, 1. Kapildeo Narayan, 2. Rambriksh 6. Gunja Thakur, 7. Brahmdeo, 8. Jung Bahudur, 9. Gopal Das and, 10. Nago Babu.

On 20th May, 1930, Jubraj Sinha of Ajgarwa and Thakur Sinha of Pakridayal delivered lectures in some villages as such, Chiraiya, Dhaka, Shikargunj, Pakari Dayal and Chaita Chorwa. About 200 men attended the meeting. They exhorted the audience to manufacture salt, boycott foreign, goods and to picket Excise shops vigorously.[43]

On 22nd May, 1930, Debi Lal Shau visited Dhaka and exhorted to 30 volunteers and 100 others to keep continued the manufacturing of salt and picketing Excise shops vigorously. Suraj Sinha[44] of Ahrawlia, a teacher of the Girls School joined the movement and had started picketing Excise shops at Chiraiya. The Congress workers at Dhaka had pasted the following notice on the road side,[45] *Dhaka Police has started practicing zulm on the congress workers and volunteers.*

On 25th May, 1930, Amar Sinha[46] a prominent non-cooperator and leader of Dhaka area was collecting volunteers to march along the Chaita Chorwa road to destroy the earthen pots hanging from the palm trees. The S.I. and the Excise S.I. hurried to pakrideyal. They found about 40 volunteers and Amar Sinha present there. Seeing the arrival of the S.I., Amar Sinha with the help of volunteers started manufacturing salt. The S.I. arrested him with the help of excise S.I. U/S 9 (a) of salt act and escorted him to Motihari.

The Banias of Dhaka had started social boycott of Police and also at such places where men had been posted for counter-picketing. The picketing of liquor, ganja and toddy shops was also started at Adapur under the leadership of one Janki Prasad,[47] Head Pandit of the local M.E. School, as a result of which on 26th May, 1930. Several customers went back from the shops disappointed and the vendor had to incur a loss of about Rs. 25.

Sub-inspector of Police, Gobindgunj reported that due to picketing of liquor shops etc. started in his area from

27th May, 1930 the sale of liquor etc. was quite dull on that day. Blades of several palm trees had been cut at Malahi, Sirni and Belahi etc. by the villagers. At Sugauli the Congress workers and volunteers were seen engaged in cutting the blades of palm trees.

On 29th May, 1930, S.D.O., Bettiah heard the cases U/S 9 (a) of Salt Act against Gopal, Ramachandra, Krishna and Vindheyachal[48] of Bettiah town and convicted them to 6 months R.I. each who had been sent up by S.I., Bettiah.

On 30th May, 1930, Birju Pasi of Siswa P.S., Motihari reported to Motihari P.S. that his son Bhola was *Thikedar* of Kherua toddy shop. He was informed by Bhola Turha, about 10 or 12 persons were cutting down the bal (blades) of palm trees near Belwa road. He then hartened to the place and found that: 1. Janab Ali, 2. Harif Mahto, 3. Thekwa Dusadh and 4. Kalicharan of village Belwa, and Raja Dusadh of Gidhwa and some 10 to 12 other persons were cutting down the *bals.* He requested them to desist from doing so, but they did not listen to him. Moreover, they abused him and said that toddy was a bad thing and its sale should be stopped forthwith. They had with them one *Hasuli* and one *Pasuli* by means of which they cut down the bals of about 25 palm trees.[49]

The movement had, however, spread to Mesrauli, Chainpur and even to Ghorasahan P.S., where picketing against toddy shops were going on vigorously.[50] At Kessaria, the picketing was still vigorous. Female volunteers were also taking part in pickeing excise shops there. Gaya Prasad, the Ganja licencee of this place was the ring-leader of the movement. He was arrested by the S.I. Police, Kessaria, under Section 107 I.P.C. The sale of Tari at Kessaria was practically stopped. The licencee of Rajpur Tari shop had been forced to leave his shop by the Congress volunteers and the villagers.

In Gobindgunj P.S., picketing was confined only to important places, such as, Sangrampur, Arreraj, Salha, Malahi and Gobinapur.[51] The licencee of Gobinapur Tari shop whose *tapper* was severally assaulted by some of the villagers and the Congress workers.

The consumption of Tari and liquor fell down miserably which is evident from the fact that a shop in Motihari town loads dispossed of only 49 gallons between 21st May as against its sale of 400 gallons of liquor[52] between 1st May and 20th May, 1930.

Intensive picketing of liquor and drug shops had began in towns of Motihari and Bettiah from 21st May, 1930. The sale of Motihari (town) fell considerably as the folliwng figures will indicate[53]

Mothari C.S.	20/5	19 gallons
—do—	21/5	8 gallons
Motihari drug shop		
Ganja	20/5	8 Chattaks
—do—	21/5	4 Chattaks
Opium	20/5	4 Chattaks
—do—	21/5	3 Ch- 3T

Sagauli was also an important center of Congress activities in Sadar Sub-division. The picketers had stationed at Sagauli drug and toddy shops. The picketing has been started there since 18th May, 1930.[54]

At Bettiah town, shops were vigorously picketed. The statement given below shows its effect on consumption. The average sale of Ganja in this district, prior to 21st May was 5 Chattak's whereas it was reduced to 3 Chattakas on 21st May and 2 Chattaks on 22nd May, 1930.[55]

Lalbazar Ganja

Sale on 21.5	3 Ch.
—do— 22.5	2 Ch.

Lalbazar opium and bhang—Prior to 21-5 average daily sale was 6 Ch.

Sale on 21-5 —	2 Ch.1¾
—do— 22-5	2 Ch. 3¼

Ganja II C.S. Average daily sale:

72.5%	25 gallons
50′0%	½ gallon
30%	½ gallon

Sale on 21-5-30

72.5%	6 gallon
500%	X 1¼ bottles
30%	X 2¼ bottles

Sale on 22-5-30

72.5%	10 gallons
50′0%	X 2 bottles
30%	2 bottles

Purab Daur Devi C.S. Average daily sale prior to 21.5.30.

72.5%	13 gallon
50′0%	4 bottles
30%	3 bottles

Sale on 21-5-30

72.5%	5 gallon
50′0%	2 bottles
30%	1 bottles

Sale on 22-5-30

72.5%	5 gallons 5 bottles
50'0%	0 ¾ bottles
30%	1 bottle

The picketeers of Tari shops were adopting the same method as they done in Sadar Sub-division in regard to the cutting of stems of palmyra trees.

The picketers had more or less done permanent damage by cutting the stems of palm trees which produce tari. As the majority of these trees had been spoiled with the consent of the owners who had given them to the Pasis for tapping toddy without entering into any formal contract, it had been practically impossible for police and excise officials to take any legal action against them. The picketers had thus succeeded in spoiling a considerable number of trees in Sadar Sub-division particularly in P.S., Dhaka, Motihari, Kessaria, Gobindgunj and Sugauli.[56] The movement had by now become so widespread that it had not been possible for police to cope with it successfully. All the licensees of Tari shops situated in Sadar Sub-division prayed action against the volunteers who besides picketing and doing damage to the palm trees. They were also threatening to boycott the vendors and the consumers socially. In cases of Ganja was raised from 3 or 4 tolas in shops which were being vigorously picketed. The following were the places[57] where this concession about relaxation of sale hours had been allowed:

1. Motihari C.S. and drug shops.
2. Dhaka C.S.
3. Sugauli C.S. and drug shops.
4. Kessaria C.S.
5. Ramgarhwa C.S. and drug shops.
6. Bettiah town shops (C.S. and drug).
7. Siriswa C.S. and Ganja shops.

The Sub-inspectors had also been given permission to extend this privilege to other shops as soon as they were satisfied that vigorous picketing was being done. It would also be advisable to change the site of some shops in cases of emergency.[58]

In Bagaha bazar the shops were being vigorously picketed. In Bettiah town with the object of preventing breach of peace by providing safe guards against intimidation by Congress picketers. Chainpatia was an important bazar and the excise shops were fairly big. The picketers on several occasions had forcibly snatched away Ganja from the hands of the consumers.[59] Police stations like Motihari, Dhaka, Gobindgunj, Kessaria and Sugauli in Sadar Sub-division were the chief centres of the picketers. The excise and the police staff were doing their best to stop the movement.

On the night of 5th June, 1930, picketers at the excise shop in Motihari became extremely rowdy. They stopped all the shops which was attached to the C.S. premises. Police arrested two of the ring leaders, Jagarnath Prasad and Motilal on advice of the S.P under Sections 177 I.P.C. and 447 I.P.C. respectively. On the complaints of the Police about 20 persons had to be arrested in Sugauli Police Station. In Dhaka P.S. 8 prominent volunteers were arrested under Section 147 I.P.C., who were chiefly instrumental in destroying the Tari pots.[60]

On 15th June, 1930, Gorakh Mahto a Pasi of Samochak reported at Kessaria P.S. about 25 to 30 Congress volunteers carrying National Flags, lathis and dantas raided the toddy shop at Rajpur[61] where about 15 to 20 customers were drinking toddy. Juthan Kanhu who was the leader told that they had attained Swaraj hence drinking should be stopped. He called his followers and asked them to remove the toddy vessels from the shop. There upon his companions broke the toddy pots and customers were removed by hands out of the shop. The

complainant demonstrated but the accused did not listen to him rather pushed him down and tried to turn him out of the shop. The complainant entered into a room in his shop and watched the accused. Leaving Gopi Pathak, Ramdhan Pandey, Sataku Mishra and Juthan Kanhu at the complt's shop the rest of the volunteers went away towards the bazar.[62]

In Bagaha Bazar, the S.I. of police was alleged to have kicked one Congress volunteer by his boots in the presence of the Senior Inspector of Police.[63] On 25th June, 1930, Kamala Prasad a student of Heycock Academy, Motihari was arrested. Consequently the students observed complete hartal on the 26th June. About twenty to thirty students came out and offered their services to the Congress.[64]

On 15th July, 1930 Bhagat Sah, a licensee of the liquor shop, and Babulal Mahto a licensee of the toddy shop of Sugauli filed petitions before the Excise Superintendent, Motihari against the activities of the Congress volunteers.[65] This was referred to the local police. After enquiring into the matter by the S.I., Sugauli it was indicated that Prameshwar Ram Sonar, Matuk Ram Sonar, Mahindra Sonar, Ramratan Thathera, Raghunandan Pasi, Sheonandan Pasi, Mathura Pasi, Dharichhan Dusadh, Kari Pawaria, Jamir Mian, Kumar Dusadh, Jalim Dusadh, Juthan Giri, Baijnath Sonar of Sugauli, Sukhan Mishra of Phulwaria, Sukhari Mishra, Dani Mishra of Sugaon, Nandan Mishra, Jagarnath Mishra, Pandit Thakur of Karamwa and Ajodhaya Mishra of Panerwa all of P.S. Sugauli were likely to disturb the peace tranquillity of the area by commiting wrongful acts such as cutting stems of palm trees, mischiefs at liquor, toddy and Ganja shops.

On 14th November, 1930, the 'Jawahar Day' was solemnly celebrated at Motihari under the Presidentship of Utam Narayan Shrivastava, District 'Dictator' and

President of the District Congress Committee.[66] A day earlier volunteers had been despatched to the nearby villages and it was found that peoples were pouring into join the procession in the morning of 16th and attended the meeting. In front of the procession prominent men and Congressmen of the town were present including Gorakh Prasad, Ramdayal Prasad Sahu, Mathura Prasad Marwari, Ramnivas Marwari, Bhagwati Charan, Mukutdhari Sinha, Shukhdeo Prasad, Pandit Govindawater Mishra, Pandit Vijay and several others.[67] A band of lady volunteers, under the guidance of Mrs. Shivadhari Pandey was in the second row followed by a considerable number of volunteers and local and Muffassil people. The procession passed through all the important roads and lanes of the town and terminated in the Congress Pandal. After formal flag saluation, a meeting was held and a resolution wholly associating with the speeches of Jawaharlal Nehru was passed. The President read out the specific extracts from the speech. Another resolution that was carried out is as follows:[68]

"In the opinion of this meeting of the people of Motihari, those selected by the Viceroy to sit at the Round Table Conference are not the representatives of the Indian people nor they can be called as such."

On 17th November, 1930, Anugrah Narayan Sinha, Dictator of Bihar Province arrived Motihari and proceeded to Dhaka for addressing a meeting there and returned to Motihari after the meeting. At Motihari he addressed a meeting attended by about 5000 people in the Congress pandal.[69]

From the weekly report of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee for week ending 21st November 1930, it appears that 466 persons were arrested during the week out of them 403 person were arrested in connection with the celebration of 'Jawahar Day' alone in the district of Champaran.[70] Pandit Shivadhari Pandey, who had been

released from Arrah Jail after serving his full term of 6 month's simple imprisonment in connection with Salt Satyagrah was arrested again on 28th November, 1930, under the Section 117 I.P.C. and 188 I.P.C.

Jugal Kishore Tiwari, a Congress volunteer from Champaran who was serving his term of imprisonment in Patna Camp Jail, died on 5th December, 1930.[71] He had been ailing for some time when all of a sudden, his condition grew worse and he expired in the evening at about 8 p.m. His body was taken to the burning ghat in a motor car by the warders and cremated there. Accidently some of the inmates of the Sadaqat Ashram got seen of it, went to the ghat and attended the cremation. When this news reached Motihari, a meeting was held on 14th December, 1930 which was attended by a large number of people. Glowing tributes were paid in the memory of the deceased and condolences were offered to the members of his family.[72]

To create havoc in the mild of the people the district authorities of Motihari had imported police and it was alleged they created a havoc in the interior villages of Motihari. A full military police force including mounted police, Gurkhas and others numbering about 150[73] was going about from village to village headed by Mr. Pearman. Their first raid was said to have been made at Phulwaria village where the mounted police force were alleged to have rushed their horses into the paddy fields and destroyed the paddy crops of the villagers. Subsequently they raided the house of Nikunt Jha and, it was reported that some books, one watch and some grains etc. were taken away. He was then arrested along with Ram Sarup Ram. The house of Sukhlal Mishra of Sugaon was then raided, with the help of some members of the Aman Sabha. Some household articles were reported to have been taken away. From Sugoan the police men went to Dighion and there also they arrested 3 men. They then proceeded to Raghunathpur

where they found a National Flag flying at the house of Motilal Sahu.[74] This was pulled down. Then they went to Shampur. The military force here struck terror into the minds of the villagers and they began to leave the village. But the police stopped them. They were assaulted. It was also alleged that the police broke open about a dozen boxes of the villagers of Shampur and articles like two gold nose rings, utensils etc. were taken away. In all, they took away properties of an estimated value of Rs. 256. Besides, many hand notes and documents belonging to Dhenuki Kumar were reported to have been destroyed which had put him to loss of several hundred.[75]

The mounted military police under the command of Mr. Pearman after the operation exploitation at Sugauli and Madhuban reached Dhaka on the 23rd December, 1930 and raided the houses of Mathura Singh, Parmanand Singh, and Brij Bihari Sharma in the villages of Bhagwatpur, Sapahara, and Sirauna respectively.[76] While they were busy in removing things from their houses. Parmanand Singh and Mathura Singh arrived at the place where military force was waiting. They were immediately arrested and sent to Motihari. Brij Bihari Singh and Tapo Singh had been released from the jail. They were also arrested and taken to the thana. After detaining for some time, they were let off in the night.[77] It was alleged some corporal chastisement. Gorakh Prasad, Pleader and well known prominent leader of Motihari, who was associated with Mahatma Gandhi in his work in Champaran, was arrested at his house on the 24th December, 1930.[78] Mukutdhari Singh, a Congress worker, was arrested on the same day at Motihari Railway Station. Raghubir Singh was also arrested on the same day (24th December) while selling 'Champaran Satyagrah Samachar' at the Matihari Railway Station.[79]

On 13th January, 1931, a Congress worker, Sajamal Rai,[80] aged about 16 years was loitering at the Railway

Platform at Sugauli with a tin Chonga in his hand, dressed in Gandhi cap and *Khaddar* and asking people to contribute towards Swaraj Fund. He was advising people not to pay chaukidari or any tax and suffer by all means for the cause of the country in spite of all sorts of repressive measures taken by the Government.

Mr. A. Hamid (Supdt. of Police, Champaran) had gone to Turkaulia to see Mr. Munna, circle officers of Bettiah Raj and he was informed that his Tahsildar who had gone to Sugaon police station, Sugauli to collect rent was chased by about 200 villagers[81] and refused payment of rent on the ground that they had now obtained Swaraj, and as such they were not going to pay any rent. Banjaria Ashram had been occupied by the Congress workers after the celebration of Independence Day. The Congress activities had been revived throughout the district. Meetings were being held at which the agitators were impressed that half Swaraj had been won and half still remained to win. If people resorted vigorously to the Civil Disobedience movement and stopped payment of chaukidari tax, full Swaraj would be attained.

The Superintendent of Police, Champaran stated that he was not able to follow the definition of peaceful picketing. The picketing was going on in the same way as in the beginning of the movement without the slightest change in the attitude of the volunteers. Excise Superintendent reported that some of the volunteers broke the toddy pitchers in Sirsa. Before the sale of toddy was going on very briskly and there was a hope of settling the shops for the new year beginning from 1st March, 1931 at increased rates. But since the announcement of the peaceful picketing the toddy vendors were not coming forward to take fresh settlement which made a very heavy loss to the excise department. S.P. of Champaran suggested to Mr. Swenzy (D.S.P. of Bettiah Sub-division) to start counter picketing to prevent molestation.[82]

Delhi Pact, 5th March, 1931

While the entire Champaran district was engaged in the Civil Disobedience Movement throughout the year 1930 and the early month of 1931, the political situation was taking some another turn at Delhi. At this time Mahatma Gandhi met Lord Irwin and after parleying for a few days an agreement was signed between them known as 'Delhi Pact" on the 5th March, 1931. According to this agreement the Civil Disobedience Movement was to be "effectively discontinued" and certain reciprocal steps were to be taken by the Government of India and the Provincial Government, including the declaration of amnesty for persons convicted in connection with the Civil Disobedience, withdrawal of ordinances, restoration of confiscated, forfeited or attached properties except in certain circumstances, and administrative concessions to make salt in certain area. As regards constitutional questions there was to be scope for further discussion of the scheme outlined at the Round Table Conference.[83]

The Congress activities in Champaran appeared to the S.P. of Champaran that the activists were very vigorously preparing themselves for the next fight which they hope would take place if their demands at the Round Table Conference were not accepted to Banjaria Ashram which was supposed to be still in their occupation had been seized by the Congress workers without making any reference to them.[84]

Picketing of excise and foreign cloth shops had revived throughout the Bettiah Sub-division. On 9th March, 1931, the Congress volunteers posted to picket the liquor shop of Pokharaha Bazar, Bettiah P.S. blocked the entrance of the shop and prevented the intending customer from reaching the counter. In case any one of them succeeded in purchasing the stuffs from the shop the same was snatched from their hands.[85] A customer was badly abused and

threatened by a volunteer who was picketing the excise shop in Bettiah.[86]

On the 13th March, 1931, the picketers had assembled in great number at the Ganja shop at Bettiah and tried to hold back a customer forcibly. Excise Sub-inspector, S.M. Akhtar Hussain of Bettiah circle reached the spot and remonstrated with them for breaking the peace condition. This infuriated Gopalji Goldar who lost his temper and said that he was prepared to do more excesses. On the same day a serious altercation took place between the volunteers and the Fateh Mian over the sale of excise articles. Similar occurrences were taking place also in Machhargawn in Jogapatti P.S.[87]

On 19th March, 1931 the volunteers of freedom movement stopped the cart carrying foreign cloths from Hari Nagar Railway Station to the shop owned by Shobha Mall Marwari of Ram Nagar.[88] The volunteers laid themselves fiat a cross the road and did not present the shopkeeper to carry the foreign cloths till the constable dispersed them under the instruction of the Inspector of Police who was present there.

The Gandhi-Irwin agreement had made an impression upon the people in general that the Government had made and object surrender, and it was propagated by the Swarajist leaders that they had almost won the battle.

The Congressmen were very much emboldened at the same time they feared the breach of peace. But efforts were being made by Congress workers to establish a parallel Government. They appointment Inspectors, Sub-Inspectors, Head-constables, constables and chaukidars in the police station at Dhaka.[89]

The police inspector, Bettiah reported that since 13th May, 1931 picketing had again been started in Mina Bazar, Lai Bazar and Municipal Market at Bettiah.[90] About 30

Congress volunteers were picketing the shops, but no action had been taken by the Raj of Bettiah, uptil now. It was reported that the picketers very often threatened the purchasers of foreign cloth to boycott them socially and at times they blocked the shops which made impossible for the purchasers to enter the shops.

The volunteers had also mobilised the volunteers to picket cloth shops in Motihari town. Some of the merchants who refused to sell foreign cloths were not allowed to sell even Swadeshi cloth.[91]

On 15th May, 1931, Mohammad Idris of Khirwa P.S., Dhaka was carrying bundles of foreign cloths on his bullock cart from Chainpur to Khirwa but the Congress volunteers stopped his cart and realised Rs. One from him as fine.[92] On the same day Mohammad Ishaq of the same village was similarly dealt with by the volunteers, while going from Chainpur to Khirwa with foreign cloths loaded on a cart. The volunteers took promise and signature of Mohammad Ishaq not to purchase foreign cloths in future.[93]

On 16th May, the volunteers snatched away ganja from the hands of a customer at Chiraiya shop under Dhaka P.S.[94] And some volunteers assaulted one phalgu Dhangar of Chiraiya[95] under Dhaka P.S. for drinking toddy at the shop Munshi Mian.

One 17th May about 15 female volunteers picketed also the cloth shops at Motihari by way of blocking the customers. They did not withdraw themselves till the shop keepers promised to seal the foreign cloths bundles.

On 28th May, 1931 a meeting was held at village Matiaria[96] under Lauriya P.S. which was attended by the local Nonias, Dhanukhes and Musahars and they were about 60 in number Gopal Saran, Swaraj Daroga delivered speeches and asked people not to drink toddy and liquor, and to put on *Khaddar*. He further exhorted them that instead of going to thana to lodge complaints, they should go and report their cases at Lauriya Congress office where

their cases would be decided. He also told them that when they would obtain Swaraj, they would not pay chaukidari tax and land rents.[97]

On 4th June, a meeting was held at village Piparasi under Dhanaha P.S. which was attended by about 200 men. Jainarain Prasad and a few other Congress workers addressed the audience and asked them to carry on the *Swaraj* work vigorously and peacefully.[98] Harbans Sahay described the causes of the enmity between the Factory and the tenant telling that the root cause of trouble was due to Mr. J.W. Broucke, Manager of Madhubani Factory and unless he would be removed, there was no hope of settlement between them.

On 6th June, 1931 two meetings were held at villages Hussaini and Pokhara respectively in Kessaria P.S. which were addressed by Bipin Bihari Verma and Mahadeo Prasad. They spoke on the subjects of: (1) construction of good and *strong Ashrams* at Hussaini and Pokhara; (2) enlistment of Congress members on payment of annas four each; (3) to make *Sangathan* (4) to organise Village panchayats to decide cases; (5) to start *Muthia* system, (6) to picket ganja toddy, liquor, and foreign cloths shops.[99]

On 8th June, 1931 a meeting was held at Gurjarabhhitauni which was attended by about 60 local men. One Amardeo Dubey addressed the meeting.[100] The speaker sang songs which he usually used to sing at other places.

On 9th June, 1931 Bipin Bihari Verma addressed a gathering of about 500 persons at village Areraj under Gobindgunj P.S.[101] He explained the audience the truce terms at first and then the *Swaraj Government.* He told them that when Swaraj would be obtained : (1) the land revenue would be reduced to half the amount, they pay at present; (2) no arrest would be made till the offence was proved to the court. And everybody would have the freedom of writing and speaking.

A meeting was also held at village Chamharia under Raxaul P.S. on 12th June, the gathering was about 500 persons including 25 Mohammadans. Bipin Bihari Verma spoke on :—(1) Hindu-Muslim unity and (2) to be ready for the battle for freedom, if there was no settlement with the Government.[102]

On 21st November, 1931, there was a meeting at Bairia in Sadar Sub-division. One Rajeshwari Prasad of the same village addressed the meeting. He explained to the audience the purpose of holding the Round-Table Conference and appealed to them for funds for the Congress. About 40 Hindus attended this meeting.[103]

On 22nd November a meeting of about 150 persons was held at Ramnagar prominent among those who attended the meeting were Prajapati Mishra, Harbans Sahay, Pir Md. Moonis (Local Workers) and Baldeo Sahay, Pleader of Patna. A resolution was passed to the effect that the authorities should be moved to reduce the irrigation tax.[104]

In the thanas mentioned Sugauli, Dhaka and Madhuban owing to Congress activity in connection with the *Aman Sabha* meetings at the end of November and early in December, 1931, a number of cases were instituted and it was found necessary to raid certain villages in order to secure the arrest of the absconding accused.

Sugauli Thana : Ramagya Tiwari[105] was and accused in the rioting case and also due to assault on Hari Prasad Mishra and others. He was absconding and his properties were attached under Section 88 Cr. P.C. Besides him, other persons such as Domo Kalwar and Bishnu Rai were also accused in the rioting case but their properties were not attached. The properties of one Jata Singh[106] were attached. Gopal Sonar was an accused in a rioting case. His properties were attached and they were still with the police.

Incidents occurred in Dhaka thana: (i) The allegations that the Congress office was raid, the Pujari of the temple assaulted and a Vaidya living in that temple compound was roughly handled and his books etc. were looted. The subject of a complaint field by the Pujari in court. The raids took place on 23rd December, 1931 the Superintendent of Police on this occasion being also present. The raids were made to attach the properties of Mathura Singh, Parmanand Singh and Hajari Sahu under Section 88 C.P.C. All of them were absconding on that day as they were made accused in cases. When the police started to attach property of Mathura Singh his brother promised to produce him at the police station and the attachment of the property was stopped. Subsequently Mathura Singh surrendered and the case was withdrawn against him on his prayer, for pardon and giving usual undertaking.[107] Hazari Sahu's house was searched and found empty. He surrendered himself subsequently in Motihari. Parmanand Singh also surrendered on that day.

At Serauna village on the date the police raided to make the attachments chaukidari tax was also collected, Brij Bihari Sharma was instigating the people not to pay the tax. Consequently he was arrested on 24th December, 1931 under the ordinance.[108]

Incidents reported from Madhuban thana : (i) Lalu Sahu was an accused in a case under Section 117 I.P.C. for instigating people for throwing brick bats on the military police and to oppose them. Lalu Sahu's property was attached under Sections 87 and 88 C.P.C. Lalu Sahu[109] subsequently surrendered in court and was pardoned on usual conditions and his property was detached, (ii) son of Ramkhelawan Chaudhary of village Punar Nagar was an accused under Section 117 I.P.C. and he was later on convicted for 6 months imprisonment.

In Bajitpur, the Superintendent of Police was present throughout. Mahabir Singh and his brother Maharaj Singh

were absconding accused and processes under Sections 87 and 88 had been issued. Mahabir Singh was arrested there and his properties were seized to secure the arrest of Maharaj Singh. Maharaj Singh surrendered subsequently in the court. The case of Chuni Sahu was similar and the properties had been detached on his being arrested and convicted.

Ganpat Sahu was the father of Lochan who was an accused and was absconding, processes under Sections 87 and 88. The houses of Ganpati Sahu was raided by the same party on 28 December, the S.P. being present Lochan surrendered in court subsequently and was convicted[110] and his property was detached.

The properties of Thakur Kumhar and Ramasray Lal were attached under Section 88 C.P.C.[111] Ramasray Lai was pardoned on the usual undertaking and received his property back. Thakur Kumhar was convicted and his property returned when he or his representative takes the property back.

The last but not the least important incident was a complaint filed by Ramsaran Das against police. The police had demolished his math. This refers not to raids conducted with the help of armed police but made by the Inspector himself at the time of the *Aman Sabha* meeting at Madhuban.[112] This complaint was enquired into by the S.P. of Motihari and found the complaint being dismissed and the complainant Ram Saran Das being prosecuted under Section 211 I.P.C.

The terms of the Delhi Agreement were not strictly observed by the Bihar Government. Commenting on the actions of Bihar Government, the Searchlight observed in its issue dated 8th April, 1931, that the Bihar Government "Continue the move on their own axis with age-old manner oblivious of the rapid march of events. As many as 74 prisoners continue to enjoy hospitality of the Government with Patna Camp jail made up as follows: Monghyr 26,

Chapra 21, Hazaribag 16, Arrah 16, Champaran 1, Balasore 2, Patna 1, Dumka 1. There are a fair number in district jails also, and in addition to it in almost every district properties attended or enfiscated remain in the possession of the Government through applications after applications have been made for their return. Punitive police too continued to be posted thereby providing a removing cause for annoyance, though they had the sense to stop collection of the costs. It is absurd to suggest that a whole month is not long enough for the very efficient agents of the Government to get through the scheme examined.... [113]

The Delhi Settlement seemed to have broken done since for weeks. There were charges and counter charges in both sides (the Government and the Congress). Mahatma Gandhi started for London on the 29th August to attend the Round Table Conference. Immediately after his return to India on 28th December, 1931, Mahatma Gandhi was apprised of the tense political situation. Regarding the main problems of constitutional progress of India the Round Table Conference did not make any further progress.[114]

The Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa in his letter (No. 6/27-C) dated 2nd January, 1932 directed all the district officers as follows :

"The Congress will revise Civil Disobedience, vigorous boycott of the British goods and liquor stores and also disobedience of the so called "unmoral laws". It is probable that in view of this decision of the Congress, the Government of India will immediately promulgate the provisions of the ordinance which will be similar to ordinance V of 1930, but with a wider definition of picketing the unlawful associations ordinance and the unlawful institution ordinance. The Emergency Power Ordinance will also be promulgated but will only at first be brought into force in those provinces where conditions are

considerably worse than in Bihar, if however, the other Ordinances and the Ordinary law are, insufficient to control this situation in Bihar, the local Government will immediately move the Government of India to extend the ordinance also to this Province but it will be necessary for them to give reasons for its extensions."[115]

The most significant feature of the year 1932 was that there was a good deal of activity or rather a good deal of talk about the institution of volunteer training camps. In Champaran, a Congress Ashram was to be opened in Dhaka Police Station where 100 volunteers would be trained in the use of the lathi, sword and spear.[116]

Since the revival of the Civil Disobedience Movement the inhabitants of Champaran showed more vigour and tenancity in their political activities. A largely attended meeting at Bettiah was held on 1st January, 1932 convened at the instance of its inhabitants. This meeting was addressed by Maulvi Mohammad Sajjad and Bipin Bihari Verma in which the audience were urged to use *Khaddar,* enlist volunteers and to attend the Puri Congress in large numbers.[117]

Another meeting was held on 3rd January in which Prajapati Mishra exhorted the audience not to pay any rent payable to the Government. On the same day a similar meeting was held at Sariswa Bazar, Majhaulia P.S. which was addressed by Hafiz Mohammad Safi, Shri Adalat and Pir Md. Moonis, the three agitators of Bettiah town on 8th January, 1932 U/S. 17 Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act 1908 was taken up by S.I., Motihari against Kamala Prasad, Ram Padarath Singh and Joganath Singh and another case was taken up under the same Section by S.I., Bettiah against Shri Adalat, Hafiz Mohammad Safi, Pir Mohammad Moonis, Ramnandan Prasad and Jainarayan Pd. as they were found collecting subscriptions for the Congress fund[118] and promoting the cause of Civil Disobedience Movement in many other ways.

On 8th January, 1932 the S.I. of Bagaha registered as case U/S 4 of ordinance 5 of 1932 against Mahadeo Lal, Siriman Narayan and Rajendra Singh as they were picketing excise and foreign cloth shops and were also abetting such picketing by other people.[119]

S.I. of Jogapatti instituted another case U/S 17 Cr. Law Amendment Act on the same date against Bishunath Singh, Kamta Rai, Raj Kumar Rai, and Subh Narayan for holding meeting and inciting people to carry on the work of Civil Disobedience Movement by manufacturing contraband salt, withholding payment of chaukidari tax and by disobeying other laws.[120]

On 10th January, 1932 S. I. of Dhaka instituted a case U/S. 17 Criminal Law Amendment Act against Brij Bihari Sharma and Ramautar Singh for managing and also assisting in the management of the Thana Congress Committee and its various branches. Brij Bihari Sharma was the Secretary of the Thana Congress Committee and a member of the District Congress and Thana Congress Working Committee. Ramautar Singh was the Vice-President and also Acting President of the Thana Congress Committee and a member of its Working Committee.[121]

S.I. of Ghorasahan took up another case on 11th January, 1932 under Section 4 of ordinance V, 1932 against Asman Ahir, Nathuni Chamar, Khedaran Koeri, Mathura Dusadh and Mukhlal Ahir[122] as they were found picketing liquor and ganja shops in their area.

When Hafiz Mohammad Safi, a Congress leader of Bettiah town was being taken as a prisoner to the court a demonstration was made by 200 boys of the local Madrasa on 12th January, 1932. There were only 41 volunteers in the Bettiah town but as soon as the news of the confiscation of local Congress office came to light fresh recruits were invited by the inhabitants of the town and by the evening their number swelled to 80.[123]

Sumitra Devi alias Nirmala Devi was the wife of Bishwanath Singh an active member of the Civil Disobedience Movement being carried on 16th January, 1932. She delivered speeches in village Lakhra, Jogapatti, P.S. which was attended by about 150 women and 50 men in which she preached 'No tax' and 'No rent' campaign for carrying on the work of Swaraj and exhorted the women in general to take part in the movement and not to fear for going to jail. The result of the meeting was that several women of Lakhra village immediately left for Bettiah and other places for picketing liquor and foreign cloth shops.[124]

After the conviction of her husband on 19th January, 1932 she left Jogapatt, *elaka* and went to Bettiah. She was sent from there and convicted, but after her release from jail she again returned to Jogapatti in the fist week of April 1932 and along with Tapeshwan Devi used to move about in the Bettiah subdivision secretly encouraging meetings in Piprahia and exhorting the people to manufacture contraband salt. She was a very active member and worker of the Congress and her agitation Center was Bettiah. Superintendent of Police, Champaran reported to the Chief Secretary to the Government and higher authorities that her presence in this district might give a fill up to the Congress agitation in the Bettiah subdivision. It had, therefore, been found desirable to issue a notice on her to quite the district.[125]

On the 26th January 1932, the 'Independence Day, was celebrated in the district of Champaran with great enthusiasm. The residents of Bettiah town attempted to celebrate the 'Independence Day' but they were prevented from doing so by making elaborate police arrangements and banning processions and meetings by the Government. As many as 8 processions were taken out in Bettiah town on that day and enquiry showed that a large number of volunteers were kept concealed in the town and every facility was afforded to them by the inhabitants.[126]

At Motihari volunteers came from near by villages and also from considerable distance, the police having prior information had posted force to prevent them coming into the town and the police pickets in some cases broke up these processions without any serious trouble. In spite of this, the volunteers succeeded in reaching the central open space in the town through lanes and by any means crowd of spectators and sightseers collected there and joined in the usual slogans. Thus Motihari had active support of the volunteers.

'Peshawar Day' was celebrated on 29th January, 1932 in form of taking out procession and observing *hartal* in Champaran.[127] Attempts were made to hoist *Swaraj* flags on Government buildings. The Muhammadans, on the whole took active part in 'Peshwara Day' or 'Frontier Day' and Bettiah was an important place where an inflammatory speech was delivered by Maulana Sajjad of Phulwari Sharif. There was a big demonstration in the town. About 50 to 60 persons[128] were arrested in procession in various parts of the town.

In spite of an effective control by the District Magistrate the mob became truculent and attacked the police. An attempt was made to reoccupy the *Ashram* which had been seized a few days earlier. A meeting was held in the Bettiah Congress *Ashram* which was addressed by Harbans Sahay.

On 4th February, 1932 the boys of tender age clad in ordinary clothes were set up to distribute and paste cyclostyled hand bills containing objectionable matters in conspicuous places in the town of Motihari.

On 10th February 'Champaran Shahid Day' was observed in Bettiah town by taking out a procession.[129] Two batches of volunteers attempted to hoist Swaraj flags on Government buildings. In the mean time, an order was passed under Section 4 (1) of ordinance 11 of 1932 directing Jagarnath Prasad Sah of Motihari town and Bishundeo

Prasad Sah of Fateh Tola, Motihari P.S. to reside in their own villages and not to move from there without the written permission of the District Magistrate or the Superintendent of Police.[130]

Jagarnath Prasad Sah was an active member of the Civil Disobedience Movement and was convicted one year vigorous imprisonment in 1930. Now he was moving in the Champaran district for holding secret meetings with a view to organising demonstrations in Motihāri town. He was incharge of the transmission of the Congress *dak* to Motihari. He was holding secret meetings in Sahupatti buildings. Owing to his secret activities he could not be run in under the Criminal Law Amendment Act or under the ordinance.[131]

Bishundeo Prasad Sah was an intimate associate of Jagarnath Prasad Sah and had been actively helping him in holding secret meeting with a view to organise demonstrations in Motihari town. He frequently arranged to send Congress volunteers from village to village to take out processions in town. He was an Active Lieutenant of Jagarnath Prasad Sah.[132]

During the Civil Disobedience Movement and even after the issue of special warning notice, the inhabitants of Piprahia played no less important part in their activities. On 12th March, 1932, Jagdeo Seth, Khedan Mallah, Jugeshar Koeri, Sital Gond under the leadership of Prasad Koeri all of Piprahia were seen picketing in Mina Bazar (Bettiah) against the sale of foreign cloths. They were arrested and convicted. On the same day Dhana Gond, Mathura Mallah, Choker Koeri and Sital Gond of Piprahia P.S. Jogapatti along with others of Dhanaha *Elaka* were seen picketing in Mina Bazar (Bettiah) and they were also arrested and convicted.[133]

On 7th March, 1932, some Congress workers of Piprahia under the leadership of Chathu Ray were seen picketing the shops of foreign cloths in Bettiah.[134] The

leaders were prosecuted under Ordinance V, and the minors were let off after detaining them for some hours in thana with a warning. On 29th March, 1932, a procession consisting of 20 Congress volunteers was taken out in Bettiah town to observe "Tarapur Shechar Day". One Lakhichand Banwari of Piprahia village was leading the procession.[135] He was prosecuted along with others U/S 17 (1) Criminal Law Amendment Act and convicted. On 7th April, 1932, the villagers of Piprahia made a grand arrangement for manufacturing contraband salt, but it was stopped by the S.D.O., Bettiah with the help of armed police. On the same day Kunja Mallah and Ramlakhan Mallah of village Piprahia along with 5 others[136] were found picketing the shops of *Naika Bazar* (Bettiah) against the sale of foreign cloths. They were arrested and convicted.

On 8th April, 1932 Paltu Koeri of Piprahia along with 5 others was arrested and sent up while picketing foreign shops in Mina Bazar (Bettiah).[137] Rambhuan Bind and Joduni Kurmi of Piprahia with other Congress workers were found in Mina Bazar gate. They were exhorting the people not to buy foreign cloth they were sent up under Ordinance V and convicted.[138]

On 11th May, 1932, Chokat Mallah, Hari Mallah and Naurangi Mallah of Piprahia with 12 others[139] took out a procession with National Flags in criminal court compound. They were sent up under Criminal Law Amendment Act and convicted. A procession consisting of 9 men was taken out in Bettiah town under the leadership of one Sobaran Bind of Piprahia.[140] They were arrested and sent up U/S 17 (1) Criminal Act.

On 25th May, 1932, Tapesari Devi of Piprahia,[141] a staunch Congress worker convened a meeting in village Lakara (Tola of Piprahia). About 30 persons attended. She proclaimed in the meeting that persons who were arrested

in the last Delhi Congress have been let off by the Government as they have no money to feed them.

On 29th May, 1932 a meeting of the Arya Samaj was held in Bettiah town under the Presidentship of Swami Ramanand.[142] Swami Satyabrat and Rambrat of Allahabad delivered speeches on social reforms. About 100 Hindus attended. Another meeting of the Arya Samaj attended by about 200 Hindus was held at Chanpatia, Bettiah P.S. on the same day.

Persistent attempts were made during the week ending on 9th June, 1932, by Congressmen to recapture Bettiah Congress *Ashram* which was seized in January last under the unlawful Association Ordinance. The S.P. received information on 12th June, that efforts were to be made by the Congressmen to forcibly take possession of *Ashram* on that date.[143] He at once proceeded to Bettiah and made necessary precautionary arrangements. In the evening a procession consisting of men and women was seen marching towards the *Ashram*. They were carrying play-cards to show that the *Ashram* belonged to the Congress and had been recaptured. Seventeen prominent men and women were arrested. After ten minutes another procession came out led by Malti Rani Devi. Ten persons including women were arrested.[144]

On 10th June, 1932

The inhabitants of Bettiah town threatened a social boycott of the rural and regular police if they did not resign their post. A batch of volunteers was sent from Bettiah to Chanpatia who instigated the shopkeepers to stop supplies of foodstuffs to any police party engaged in the investigation of a political case. As a general rule police officers were refused conveyance so that a detachment of Gurkha Military Police could not get a single cart at Bettiah railway station to carry their luggage. Leaflets

containing seditious matters were distributed openly and fearlessly inciting the police to resign their post and to disobey all orders of the authorities.[145]

Violent picketing was carried out in *Bettiah Raj* market known as *Mina Bazar* which caused a heavy loss to the Raj and great inconvenience to the shop-keepers as well as the purchasers. Even the Raj Tahsildar, incharge of the *Bazar* could not escape violence at the hands of the picketers and a social boycott was started against him and the ladies of his house were subjected to many indignities.[146] The next move of the inhabitants of Bettiah town was to incite people for non-payment of chaukidari tax.

On 12th June, 1932, a desperate attempt was to be made to recapture the Congress *Ashram* by the volunteers. This was prevented by the presence of the Deputy Superintendent of Police with armed force at Bettiah.[147] A procession of 12 Congress volunteers trespassed into the S.D.O.'s *Bungalow* at Bettiah. They carried tri-coloured National Flags and shouted the usual slogans "Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai". Some of them were local men and others from Gorakhpur and Saran district. These men were honoured by the Congress volunteers at Bettiah town.[148] They were arrested and sent up under the Criminal Law Amendment Act. Some volunteers of Bettiah town came out to picket excise shops on 15th June, 1932.[149] But they were removed in usual way as they were minors. With a view to stop the Congress activities in Bettiah town, Mr. Hamid, S.P., of Champaran strongly recommend that a collective fine of Rs. 10,000 be imposed on the inhabitants of Bettiah. The provisions of Section 26 of Emergency Power Ordinance was also imposed by the district authorities.[150] But the presence of the volunteers of other places in Bettiah town clearly indicated the deep sympathy of the inhabitants of the town with the movement. It also showed their shrewdness.

In spite of warnings the inhabitants of Sirauna, Dhaka P.S. in furtherance of the Civil Disobedience Movement were enjoyed in commission of offences, harbour such offences and commit other such acts which were prejudicial to the maintenance of law and orders. During the Civil Disobedience Movement there was violation of the Salt Law resulting in the conviction of several persons. The villagers stopped payment of chaukidari tax which necessitated the deputation of armed police force and the tax was then realised. Processions are were frequently taken out sometimes parading the *thana* premises also.[151]

On the occasion of *Aman Sabhia* held on 17th June, 1932 a large mob consisting of thousands of people came armed with deadly weapons to attack the thana[152] Village Sirauna contributed fairly a large number of persons. An *Ashram* was established in the year 1930 which was being used as a centre of activities of the villagers. The villagers had played an important part during the Civil Disobedience Movement. Even after the conviction of four active leading workers, namely[153] Brijbihari Sharma, Tapi Singh, Rup Narayan Sharma, and Rambilas Verma the villagers did not feel shattered and they were still very active and strong.

The above incidents and other connecting circumstances it is evident that the inhabitants of village Sirauna, Dhaka P.S. were paid no heed to the warnings issued from time to time and appeared that they were defying law and orders. Mr. A.F.A. Hamid (Superintendent of Police, Champaran) recommended a sum of Rs. 250 to be imposed as collective fine on the villagers and requested that immediate action be taken to stop further activities of the villagers.[154]

The villagers of Piprahia in Champaran refused to pay the collective fine imposed upon them under the Ordinance as reported to in D.M's official Memo no. 115 C.C. dated 20 June, 1932. The local Government was then

contemplating to the imposition of a similar fine on certain *muhallas* of Bettiah town.[155]

The year, 1933 was the year in which the Congress straying in Wilderness. The Civil Disobedience campaign was slowly dying a natural death, and there was no alternative to take its place. Gandhiji realised the futility of *Satyagraha* as a weapon of political movement. He felt that "the masses have not received the full message of *Satyagraha* owing to its adulteration in the process of transmission". Therefore after "an intense introspection, searching of the heart, and waiting upon God", Gandhiji decided that henceforth no one but himself should carry on Civil Disobedience, and the rest should devote themselves to the Constructive Programme.[156]

The Harijan Movement was gathering momentum guided by Mahatma Gandhi from *Yeravda Jail* and later from outside, and it was engaging much attention of the national workers in Bihar as elsewhere. As we have seen the political activities of the Civil Disobedience Movement were going on at a comparatively low ebb, side-by-side with some efforts for communal harmony and unity among the different ranks of Indian Statesmen, viz., through the Allahabad Unity Conference. There was no change in Government dual policy of appeasement and repression.[157]

As for the other aspect of Government policy may be note that repression was in fullswing, all the special laws supressing public activities were being rigorously enforced, persons were being sent to the prison and demands for the release of political prisoners were being disregarded. According to the instructions of Rajendra Prasad, then Acting President of the Indian National Congress, on the 4th January, 1933, the anniversary of the Gandhi Incarceration Day, a statement prepared for this occasion was read in meetings held at different places in the midst of *lathi* charges and arrests. At Motihari five persons were arrested on this day and National Flag was snatched away

by the town policemen[158] from a party of the processionists. The person were arrested and convicted at Bettiah for taking out a procession. Rajendra Prasad was arrested at the Patna Railway Junction on that day under Section 17(1) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, and sentenced six month's vigorous imprisonment at Patna.[159]

On the 26th January, 1933, numerous persons were arrested at different places in Bihar and many of them were sent into prison for celebrating the Independence Day. On that day fourteen peoples were arrested at Patna. Prominent among them being Anugraha Narayan Sinha, Rajendra Prasad's wife Chandravati Devi and four other ladies. At Motihari a Congress procession was dispersed by *Lathi* charge. The Congress volunteers also organised a procession at Bettiah, Narkatiaganj and Raxaul in the district of old Champaran.[160] Apprehending that the Provincial Congress Committee would revive the no-tax campaign from March 1933, the higher police authorities asked their officers on the 25th February "to keep a strict lookout for any signs of such a campaign and take every action possible to prevent the revival of the movement."

M.S. Aney, the Acting President of the Indian Nation Congress, announced on the 20th February, 1933, that the 47th annual session of the Congress would meet at Calcutta on the 31st March and 1st April, 1933. The Government banned the session and arrested M.S. Aney at Kharagpur railway station, Madan Mohan Malaviya and some others were arrested at Asansol and detained in the jail there till 3rd April.[161] Many were arrested in Bengal but the Congress met with the inner group of the delegates and passed seven resolutions, while *lathi* blows by the police were raining all round. In Bihar, the Government authorities left no stone unturned to prevent its delegates from attending Calcutta session of the Congress. The delegates intending to go to the Calcutta session were arrested either on the spot or on their way to that place.

About ten delegates from the district of Champaran were arrested either on the way or in Calcutta.[162] Makutdhari Singh of Champaran was then Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee was arrested in Patna.

By the end of March, 1933, the Government of Bihar and Orissa modified to some extent their policy about conviction and imprisonment of Congress workers. The Government decided to release in "suitable batches", on different dates, persons considered by them "to be unimportant Civil Disobedience prisoners who are not likely to resume Civil Disobedience activities". Such remission were not be granted in the case of (i) "leaders of the Civil Disobedience Movement (ii) prisoners who have already been twice or more often previously convicted in connection with the Civil Disobedience Movement and (iii) refractory prisoners who caused trouble in the jail."[163] The sort of remission referred to above was meant for prisoners confined till the 29th March, 1933.

To Mahatma Gandhi the uplift of the Harijans had become indeed a matter of faith and truth under the urge of the inner voice of conscience. To serve its cause he once again announced on the 29th April his final decision to fast for twenty-one days as a measure of self-purification. The fast commenced in the Yervada prison on the 8th May and it continued till the 29th May, 1933.[164] Mahatma Gandhi's fast caused much anxiety in Bihar as in other parts of India. In Champaran meetings were also held at various places in connection with his fast.

Simultaneously with his release on the 8th May, Mahatma Gandhi issued a statement advising temporary suspension of the Civil Disobedience Movement, and appealing to the Government, in the interest of real peace of the land; to discharge unconditionally all the civil registers. Close upon this statement, M.S. Aney, Acting President of the Congress, announced suspension of the

Civil Disobedience Movement with an appeal to the people to devote this period for the uplift of the *Harijans*. But this did not produce any charge in Government policy with regard to the civil registers. The Congress was in a delicate position. Even the temporary suspension of the Civil Disobedience Movement did not appeal to some prominent leaders like Subhas Chandra Bose and Vithalbhai Patel. Jawaharlal Nehru was not also happy over it. "That suspension", he writes, "had given a final blow to the movement, for one can not play fast and loose with a national struggle and switch it on and off at will."[165]

To decide the future line of action an informal conference of leading Congressmen, then outside the jails, was convened at Poona, from the 12th to the 14th July, 1933. The Congress, under Mahatma Gandhi's advice, ultimately decided to suspend mass Civil Disobedience but permitted individual Civil Disobedience and burred secret methods. Under the orders of the Acting President, all Congress organisations and War Councils ceased to function in view of the suspension of mass *Satyagraha*. The President also called upon all Congressmen unable to offer the Civil Disobedience to carry on constructive activities of the Congress. All this was mentioned in a statement of Mr. Aney, dated the 22nd July, 1933.[166]

On Government's refusal to grant Mahatma Gandhi similar facilities as before for carrying on *Harijan* work inside the prison, Mahatma Gandhi commenced another fast "Untodeath" on the 16th August. But as his condition became extremely serious he was released unconditionally on the 23rd August, 1933. Jawaharlal Nehru was also released from the *Naini* prison on the 30th August, 1933.

From July onwards many in Bihar had started individual Civil Disobedience, and had courted imprisonment. Not only in the cities but also in the interior places in the Champaran district. At Bettiah, Motibari,

Raxaul, Kesaria, Chanpatia, Sugauli and Narkatiyaganj picketing of foreign cloth shops and excise shops continued along with other constructive works.[167]

The Earthquake, 1934

Bihar was severally affected by a grave calamity in the shape of a terrible earthquake which occurred in the afternoon (2.15 p.m.) on the 15th January, 1934.[168] It devastated an area of about 30,000 square miles, destroyed thousands of human lives, caused terrific damage to land and buildings, railways and telegraph lines etc. After this calamity Rajendra Prasad was released from Jail on the 17th January and with the cooperation of some other workers he organised a non-official committee. He called the Bihar Central Relief Committee for distributing relief among the people of the devasted areas whose miseries knew no bounds. He also informed Gandhiji about it by a telegram dated 21st January, 1934.[169] Mahatma Gandhi reached Patna in the evening of the llth March, 1934. After moving from place to place in the affected areas and conferting the distressed people, Mahatma Gandhi reached Motihari on the 14th March, 1934 in connection with the devastating earthquake of Bihar, 1934. His visit infused a new hope and inspiration to the people in the midst of a great catastrophe. In Champaran also a Central Relief Fund was formed under the Presidentship of Prajapati Mishra to redress the sufferings of the people.[170]

The Allahabad Earthquake Relief Committee deputed Jawaharlal Nehru to visit the effected areas in Bihar. He took a strenuous tour of torn and ruined territories for ten days. Coming to Champaran he himself began to moving the debris on 12th February, 1934,[171] as the district had reduced into heaps of debris. It gave much impetus to the needed and urgent relief. work. A large batch of volunteers including some leading Congressmen also come from all over the country for relief work in desolated Bihar. The Bihar Central Relief Committee was

soon reorganised as a Central Relief Committeee, to which were associated a large number of relief organisations coming from the various parts of the country.[172] Branches of the Central Relief Committee worked in all the affected districts.

Immediate relief was provided and this work continued for nearly two months. But the most baffling problem was the reconstruction and rehabilitation the people of the devastated areas. Referring to it, Rajendra Prasad observed : "It is vast and complicated enough to tax all the energy, enthusiasm and concentration we can command and to exhaust all the funds that the generous instincts of our countrymen and foreigners can furnish".[173]

In the evening of the 13th March, 1934, Gandhiji accompanied by Rajendra Prasad, Valji Desai, Murli Manohar Prasad, and Ambika Kant Sinha drove round the city of Patna "to witness the damages done by the earthquake". Next morning, Gandhiji and his party, consisting of Miss Muriel Lester, Miss Hogg, Mira Behn, Rajendra Prasad and Krishnaballav Sahay crossed the Ganges on a country boat from *Ranighat* to *Sebalpur* on the other side of the river and from there they proceeded on cars to Sonepur. Here again, after crossing the Gandak they resumed their journey to Lalganj Via Hajipur. They reached Lalganj at half-past ten and after two hours' stay they resumed their journey to Motihari. They reached Kesaria in Champaran district at about quarter past five. Leaving Kesaria at about six, the party reached Motihari at eight in the night.[174]

In the morning of the 15th March, Gandhiji and his associates went round some of the affected areas in Sadar and Dhaka thanas, along with Bipin Bihari Verma and Prajapati Mishra, and visited the Pakridayal and Phenhara centres of the Bihar Central Relief Committee. Gandhi and his party returned from the tour of the affected areas at about 11 a.m. In the afternoon he went round

Motihari town and saw himself the depth of devastation caused.[175]

To the people of Motihari Gandhiji advised— "This is no time for talking. I have come to see and help you, and not talk. But there are two things I want to say to you. The first is this, the relief committees have the money and either beggars or workers will take it. And I want no beggars. I would be deplorable, if this earthquake turned us into mendicants. Only those without eyes or hands, or feet, or otherwise unfit for work may ask for alms. For the able bodied to beg is, in the language of the Gita, to become thieves.

The Second thing is this, that God has himself sent us this gift. We must accept it as a gift from Him, and then we shall understand its meaning what is that meaning. It is this, that untouchability must go, that is to say, nobody must consider himself higher than another.

If we can understand these two things, this earthquake will be turned into a blessing. At present we count it as a sorrow, and no wonder when we see these fair fields and lands devastated. But I pray to God that He may give us strength to make a blessing out of this destruction".[176]

After evening prayers Gandhijee met the representatives of different relief organisations working in Champaran, including the officers of the Government and heard from them the reports of the works so far done by them. After expressing pleasure at their cooperation, he impressed upon the Congress relief workers to offer prompt assistance to the sufferers in perfect coordination with others, particularly the Government relief organisations. Gandhi and his party left Motihari in the morning of the 16th March, 1934 for Muzaffarpur.[177]

The land of Champaran saw Jawaharlal Nehru in the shape of a volunteer Sugauli Congress Committee turned

towards the public affected by earthquake. Rajaji Jha [178] was made the in-charge of this Committee. This Relief Committee continued working with perfect readiness and promptness. Sukham Mishra, Nikunt Jha, Gokul Thakur, Ramjee Jha etc. were cooperating this Committee by way of the affected people in shape of distributing not only the cloths and corns but also gave financial assistance. The Congress, organisation close to came the public in action and the public joined the Congress, the following provoked local song :

> "Gandhi Baba Jogiya, Jawahar Bairagia,
>
> Rajendra Babu na, Bhailey Sadhu re Fakirwa."

The scope of the Bihar Central Relief Committee had largely broadened. There were altogether 41 centres in Champaran district, out of which 34 were in Motihari and 7 in Bettiah sub-division.[180] Out of twenty *thanas* of this district 13 had been declared earthquake affected thana in the district of Champaran. Prajapati Mishra along with his six other lieutenants was the helper of relief operation. At the 41 different centres local workers were ably working as heads. There were 5 to 15 men intended to assist them. Their number depends upon the area under the supervision of a centre. There were few workers of Gujarat, Bombay, Madras and other provinces.[181] Majority of workers belonged to the Congress. About two lakhs of rupees had been spent in relief works in shape house building construction, water supply, cash help, expenses on tours and for the amelioration of the unemployed and also for help to the earthquake affected people.

Motihari Hindu Sabha

After stopping the works of giving general relief to the quake-striken people of Champaran, since the middle of the May, 1934, the sub-divisional Hindu Sabha concentrating its energies on the matters of repairing or reconstructing Hindu temples of the district which fell

down in wake of the devastating quake. Mr. Harischandra Dutta was the Secretary of the Sabha. An emergent meeting of the Working Committee of the Motihari sub-division Hindu Sabha was held on 27th May, 1934 in the premises of the local Hindu Bhawan[182] and passed protest resolutions against the reported prosecution of Pandit Ram Chandra by the Bedar police of the Nizam's Government. There was also resolution request the Nizam's Governments for the withdrawal of the case already instituted against the Pandit Ramchandra a well known worker of Hindu Sabha of his time.

Bipin Bihari Verma was being pressed by his friends and co-workers to stand for the assembly election from north Tirhut non-Mohammedan constituency. A few of his associates had approached him with much confidence that he will definitely comply with their requests. Bipin Bihari Verma was well known in the Provincial Congress Circle for his winning manners. He had ably worked as the Chairman of Bettiah Municipality and Champaran District Board for six years. He was holding the office of the President of the District Congress Committee for over a decade and was a member of the A.I.C.C. since 1922. Moreover, during his stay in England, he spent much of his time in studying the working of Parliament and several self-governing institutions. The workers of Muzaffarpur district also welcomed his candidature.[183]

The Viceroy's Relief Fund was also working in the earthquake stricken areas. It took up the task of distributing relief even in the rural areas amounting to Rs. 5 to Rs. 20 for the repair of the houses affected in the earthquake. But the relief work was being done on the recommendation of local *Patwaris* and *Tahsildars*. It was strongly and widely felt that the *Patwaris* and *Tahsildars* generally recommended the cases and enlisted the names of only such persons whom they like and not to such persons who needed help. This was very unsatisfactory.[184]

The sub-divisional Hindu Sabha of Motihari had forwarded the list of 100 quake-stricken families of this district to the Maha Sabha for migration into the Province of Bengal. It was at least 50 families would be escorted to Bengal. The Sabha had also made arrangements for free training in tailoring and various other arts for the Hindu youths specially who were literates and were out of employment. All expenses of boarding, lodging and training fees, etc., would be borne by the Sabha itself.[184] *The Marwari Relief Society* started its relief operations in the district of Champaran on 23rd January, 1934 and had been working in a good manner. It trained workers under the able guidance of Pandit Parmanand Pandey deserved heartfelt thanks for their real zeal and earnestness in relief works. They selected a few *thanas* only to work within but the significance lies in the fact that wherever they went, they distributed adequate relief and were very sympathetic and kind to the sufferers both rich and poor. Instead of opening more branches and centres like that of the B.C.R.C. Its method of working had to hurry upto places with sufficient relief where from they were requisitioned. The society had constructed a free colony on semi-permanent basis for the local *Harijans,* the opening ceremony of which was expected to take place in the 3rd week of July, 1934. The rates of house materials and food stuffs were considerably cheaper than those of other societies.[186]

A very impressive function was witnessed on 11th July, 1934 at 8 a.m. when Seth Jamunalal Bajaj performed the opening ceremony of the *Harijanpuri* built by the *Marwari Relief Society of Calcutta* which had been doing excellent relief work at Motihari from the beginning. The *Harijanpuri* was tastefully decorated with flags, festoons and chairs and Sandal sticks burning with invigorating perfume. There was a fairly large audience, prominent among those present were Maulvi Mohammad Hafiz, advocate, Patna, Mathura Prasad, Parbati Devi of Delhi,

Khan Bahadur Maulvi Mahmmad Jan, Ganesh Prasad Sahu, Chairman, Municipality and President District Board, Harijan Seva Sangh, Maulvi Wahid, Pleader, Vice-Chairman, Municipality, Brij Bihari Saran Verma, Lakshmi Narayan Singh, Ram Saran Prasad, Raghubir Prasad Singh, Rameshwar Das Kedia, Kedar N th Motani, Pandit Bhrigu Saran Mishra, Kedarji Marwari. Sukhdeo Prasad, Secretary District Harijan Seva Sangh, Maulvi Saheb Raja Khan Mokhatar, Bhagwati Charan and poet Bijuli of Delhi, besides many others and also students of the local H.E. school.[187]

The boys of the local Harijan *Patashala* were seated in a row behind the dais.[188]

The function began with a vedic prayer by Lala Bosha Ram and recitation of poems to the occasion by Bhagwati Charan and poet Bijuli, Pandit Parmanand Pandey, camp incharge of the Marwari Relief Society read a short report of the relief work done by the Marwari Relief Society here which was very much appreciated. After this, Jamunalal Bajaj, in a nice speech, encouraged the *Harijan* works and emphasised the necessity of pushing on the Harijan works with vigour. He asked the *Harijans* to reforms and improve the ways of their living and to work for their redressal. He then formally declared the *Harijanpuri* open.

After this Rajendra Prasad stood up admist cheers of enthusiasm and spoke some hard facts. He said that the movement of Harijan emancipation was being received by love and respect on the one hand and by *lathi* and bomb on the other and Mahatmaji was going on with his work a head.[189] He asked the workers to go on with the work fearlessly and to see that the *Harijanpuri* is kept clean and tidy and its inmates be neat and clean. He was followed by Maulvi Md. Hafiz and Sukdeo Prasad.[190] He later on also proposed a vote of thanks to the leaders and gentlemen present there.

In the mean time a great communal riot was averted on 26th August 1934, at Sugauli which was apprehended over the performance of the *Mahabiri Jhanda* celebrations.[191] The Hindus of Sugauli like other places had decided to take out *Mahabiri Jhanda* procession on the 25th August, 1934 to which the Mohammadans of that place seriously objected on the plea that their lives were in danger. The authorities passed orders against taking out such processions at Sugauli on the ground that it was against the sentiments of the Muslims. However, the Hindus were still determined to take out the procession as a matter of right and thus a serious riot was apprehended. About ten thousand Hindu collected near Sugauli from all sides and Mohammadans were also prepared to fight and probably they had invited a good number of goondas from outside.[192]

However, this news reached the Motihari authorities and also the leaders of the Congress and Hindu Sabha. A batch of military force hurrided to the place with the Deputy Magistrate besides Rai Saheb Braj Bihari Sinha, Prajapati Mishra, the local Congress leader, and Harish Chandra Dutta, Secretary, Motihari Hindu Sabha, also reached there, and pacified the Hindu residents. This successfully averted the apprehended riot.[193]

On the 9th November, 1934 Phanindra Nath Ghosh, approver in the Lahore conspiracy case had opened a shop at Bettiah. He was stabbed there and died after a week. Baikunth Shukul and Chandrama Singh, both suspects were absconding. They evaded arrest for sometime. The police announced handsome rewards for capturing them. One night while returning from Dighwara, Baikunth Shukul was ambushed at Sonepur by a police party and was overpowered by them after a hot chase. He was sentenced to death and hanged in the Gaya Jail.[193] His co-accused, Chandrama Singh, was acquitted in the trial. Both of them belonged to Yogendra Shukul's organisation. Rambinod Singh was convicted for harbouring persons

whom the Government considered 'undesirables'. Yogendra Shukul, Bassawan Singh and Rambinod Singh were taken to Bhagalpur Jail. Yogendra Shukul was kept there in fetters for about two years, and he along with two or three others remained on hunger strike for eighteen days as a protest against the harsh treatment meted out to them in the Jail. One night Yogendra Shukul was taken to Hazaribagh jail. Basawan Singh to Gaya and Ramparikshan Singh to Cuttack. Yogendra Shukul was kept in Hazaribagh jail for about a month in iron cell. After that he was kept sometime in the Alipore Central Jail and also probably in some other jails. In the last he along with several others was sent to the Andamans.[194]

Thus the old district of Champaran, took an active part in the Salt Satyagraha and in the Civil Disobedience Movement from 1930 to 1934. The people of this district warmly responded the call of the Indian National Congress. This district equally participated in the public meetings, preparation of salt, boycott of foreign goods, picketing at the liquor shops and others programmes covered by the Congress. The women of Champaran also participated in the strikes and boycotts that were organised by the district and local leaders. Another significant feature of the movement in this district was that on the whole the people of Champaran faced the situation calmly and boldly and remained non-violent in face of gravest provocation. The district of Champaran, thus contributed much to India's freedom.

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4

Champaran and the Quit India Movement, 1930-34

In the history of Indian National Movement the 'Quit India Movement of 1942' was as dramatic and as explosive as other events. The movement had many ramifications and dimensions as it had both political and social roots. There is no dearth of literature on this historic event but they are by and large on all India basis and lack regional perspective. Various regions responded to the call of the nation in different ways. Champaran, for instance, had a strong 'protest' tradition.

World events were moving rapidity in a dramatic way causing acute anxiety in human minds. Already before the opening of the year 1942, the war situation had taken a highly ominous turn threatening Indian at her very doors and also vitally affecting British interests. On the 7th December, 1941, there was a sudden air-attack by the Japanese Air Force on the American naval base at Pearl Harbour and Japan also crippled the United States pacific fleet. The strong British naval base at Singapore, though to be impregnable, surrendered more than 75,000 British and Indian troops falling into their hands.[1] The return of Sir Stafford Cripps from Russia with added laurels in his cap made him the cynosure of all eyes, the observed of all observers and he too was circumspect in his statements. All eyes turned to him as the man for India, the one person who could bring a fresh mind and a fresh viewpoint to bear

on the Indian problem. Sir Stafford Cripps himself felt attracted by the proposal that he should take the Indian problem in India.[2]

To consider the situation the Working Committee of the Congress, met at Bardoli on 23rd December, 1941 and issued a series of instructions in anticipation of the Japanese attack. The general trend of these instructions was to set up under the Congress an independent organization, outside the government, throughout the country, in order to help and serve the people in any contingency out of the threatened Japanese invasion.[3]

On 5th January, 1942, Gandhiji explained his own position vis-a-vis the Bardoli resolution: "I am a servant of the Congress and I want to serve the Congress inconsonance with the principles of truth and non-violence. The Working Committee has decided to cooperate with the government in the War, if Britain grants *Swaraj* to India. It is not a fact that the Congress has violated the principle of non-violence, but it has only made a small opening just with a view to shake hands with Britain. Rajaji thinks that all of us should go to war fully armed, but it may not be the opinion of all."[4] The net position was that although the Congress shook off the pacifism of Gandhi, it reiterated its old policy of non-cooperation with the war-efforts of the government so long as the independence of India was not guaranteed.

How to save India from the imminent war peril was then the utmost concern of her national leaders. By the third week of January, 1942, the Congress leaders of Bihar returned to the province after attending the meetings of the All-India Congress Committee at Wardha, where the Bardoli resolution of the Working Committee was approved and confirmed. They held meetings at different places, in which, besides exposing the weakness of Britain's War Policy, they emphasised on constructive works and discussed measures of civil defence. Anugraha Narayan

Sinha initiated a scheme for organisation of *Seva Dal,* consisting of people who would move about allaying panic and helping distress.[5]

In India's epic struggle for freedom as taken under this mighty revolution, the old district of Champaran played a chivalrous role with unflinching determination and unbending spirit in the face of the most ruthless repression of the ruling authority. The people boldly courted imprisonment and breasted the severest ordeals through immense sacrifices. Many earned martyrdom in the prime of their life.[6]

The national leaders of Bihar had realised earlier than August 1942 that the country was in combustible atmosphere which was bound to produce a popular revolt. In fact, by their tours and speeches indifferent parts of Bihar during the months of May, June and July, they had effected a psychological preparation of the people for this inevitable and impending struggle.[7]

Champaran Momin Conference

At this juncture the 3rd Champaran District Momin Conference was held at Adapur (Motihari) on May 13, 1942. Presiding over the Conference Mr. Abdul Qaiyum Ansari, President, Bihar Provincial Jamiatul Momin observed that "the figure of Momins can not be reduced from forty-five million to four to five million by the jugglerly of Mr. Amery nor can be Momins be dismembered by the Jinnah-Amery conspiracy against them. The Momins mean to live and they will live in spite of Amery's and Jinnah's". Over 6,000 Momins, mostly from Nepal, attended the Conference and the chief feature was the presence of about 1500 Momin ladies, a large number of whom came from Nepal.[8]

Mr. Qaiyum Ansari, continuing his speech observed that the Momin community stood for the complete

independence of India, which it considered as its motherland, and abhored Pakistan for various reasons, the chief among which he said was that the Pakistan would destroy the integrity, solidarity and unity not only of India but also of the Momins whose culture and outlook were different from those of the so-called upper class Muslims. The establishment of Pakistan, Mr. Ansari emphasised, would mean the enslavement of the Momin nation at the hands of the *Capitalist* and *Zamindars* who today wielded much power and influence.[9]

Mr. Ansari proceeding further laid much stress on the Hindu-Muslim unity and asked the poor to unite against their exploiters, be they Hindus or Muslims, who were united to protect their own interests by oppressing the poor belonging to either community. Dwelling upon the present political situation, Mr. Ansari criticised Mr. Rajagopalachari's move to concede the demands of the Muslim League and declared that it could not bring peace to the land nor could it achieve the desired object of Mr. Rajagopalachari, namely, the national government, so long the Momins were ignored in order to please Mr. Jinnah and so long their demands were not conceded. The Momins were fully conscious of their position and they would not rest content their just and proper place in the administration of the country. Mr. Ansari, further refuting the assertion of Mr. Jinnah and his henchmen that all Momins were with the Muslim League challenged to hold a plebiscite to decide the issue. He said, "I ask you, Momins, not to be perturbed over the attitude of Mr. Amery which is antagonistic to your national interest, but to stand up and organise and strengthen yourselves to such an extent that Mr. Amery or anybody else should no more dare to coerce the Momin Nation."[10]

Mr. Hafiz Deen Muhammad Rai Saheb of Chanpatia and President, Champaran District Momin Jamiat[11] vehemently criticised the Muslim Leaguers and those of

upper class Muslims who characterised the Momin Movement as the one which had created cleavage and caste distinction among the Muslims and said that on the contrary, it were the upper class Muslims and their *Ulemas* who had created the distinction of 'Shareef' and 'Razee' by resorting to the unIslamic practice of caste superiority which was formed by several of the so-called *Ulemas* and *Pirs* belonging to the upper class group Muslims and which the Muslim League leaders ignored with a touch of connivance. Mr. Hafiz Saheb declared in the Momin Conference that the Pakistan was a great danger to the Momin and other Muslims alive. He said that those who themselves were not 'Pak' (Pure) and did not act in their daily life upon the injunctions laid down by Islam had no right to talk of Pakistan. Let the Muslim League Leaders first practice *Nomaz* and *Roza* (Prayer and fast) according to religion of Islam and then come to the "Muslim masses with their message.

Mr. A. Jalil, M.L.A., while opening the proceedings of the conference dwelt at length on the Momin Movement[12] and said that the movement had fully exposed the long standing tactice of the Muslim League leaders whose sole object was to dominate and exploit for their selfish ends the poor and backward classes among Muslims by raising attractive slogans like 'Islam in danger' and 'Pakistan' etc.

On Pakistan issue, Mr. Jalil said that Pakistan scheme was illogical and absurd, inasmuch as, instead of providing protection and security for the Muslim residing in the Muslim minority provinces, it intended to give power and protection to them who were already strong and in majority in the Hindu minority provinces. If Pakistan were ever to be established, he mentioned, it would be so at the cost of over 3 crore Muslims of the Hindu majority provinces who would be mercilessly sacrified by Mr. Jinnah at the alter of Pakistan. Mr. Jalil begged of Mr. Jinnah not to persist in his folly of creating a dangerous thing

Pakistan and impound the life and liberty of over 3 crore of Muslims to no purpose.[13]

Madhuban Thana Political Conference

Next day of the Momin Conference the Madhuban *Thana* Political Conference was held at Madhuban (District Champaran) on the 14 May, 1942 under the Presidentship of Shukdev Prasad Verma.[14] Anugrah Narain Sinha, Ex-Finance Minister, Bihar, spoke at great length on the present political situation in the country with special reference to war and exhorted the audience of more than five thousand to take up seriously and without loss of time the self-sufficiency programme of the Congress, organize village defence, grow more food crops and spin regularly, Prajapati Mishra, Braj Bihari Sharma, Mahadev Prasad and others also addressed the gathering. Condolence resolutions were adopted on the death of Jamnalal Bajaj, Dhanukh Rao and Ramdayal Rai.

The Anti-Pakistan Day was befittingly observed in Champaran district on the 16th May, 1942.[15] It was observed at Bettiah, Motihari, Majhaulia, Chanpatia, Bagaha and Ram Nagar. Speeches criticising Rajaji's move in supporting Pakistan scheme were delivered at all these places. The usual resolutions were adopted and Independence pledge was taken up at all places. Bharat Mishra General-Secretary of Bihar Provincial *Hindu Sabha* and Pandit Bajrang Dutta Sharma addressed the gethering at Motihari and Bettiah respectively. Bharat Mishra was convicted and sentenced to under go imprisonment for 9 months for same speech delivered in Bettiah. He was lodged in the Motihari Jail where he was treated as a 'C' class prisoner.

Ratneshwar Mishra, Working President, Bihar Provincial *Hindu Mahasabha,* in course of his inaugural address at the District Political *Hindu* Conference held at Bagaha (Champaran)[16] on the 24th May, 1942 said that the

Hindu Mahasabha was conscious of the harm that the Muslims were doing to the Hindus by claiming for themselves all the martial qualities of India and as saviours of India and all such nonsense that one could dream of, although history pointed out in the other direction. "Hindus have not only proved to be better and more valiant fighter in the present war but have also proved their undisputed leadership to lead men to battle and to victory as has been amply demonstrated in Africa campaign in past years and during the last World War. He would like to remind of his British friends that the real sword of India are the Hindus just as the political and economic arms of India are Hindus who born in the military tradition of their ancestors. The days are not far when the Muslims will see the fully of false agitation and agree to live peacefully with us, and Britain realising the mistake of their policy of sowing seeds of hatred and communal bitterness will come to terms with Hindu India."[17]

Kumar Ganganand Sinha was President of the Second Session of the Champaran District Hindu Sabha. The following resolutions were adopted.[18]

(1) This meeting of the Working Committee of the Bihar Provincial *Hindu Sabha* congratulate Pandit Bharat Mishra, General Secretary, Bihar Provincial *Hindu Sabha* and ex-Member of the All India *Hindu Mashasabha* Committee on the spirit of suffering and sacrifice he has displayed and offers him its good wishes. The Committee notes with regret that he is being treated as an ordinary criminal in the Motihari district jail and urges upon the Bihar Government the desirability of affording him the amenities necessary for a man of his status and position in public life.

(2) In view of the imminent threat of invasion of India the Government of India should take adequate steps to accelerate the defence of India by recruiting *Hindus* in Land, Naval and Air Forces according to their population in the country and as far as possible keep them within the borders of India because to *Hindus* alone India is both a father land and holy land and they consider it to be their sacred duty to oppose the domination of this country by any external power.

(3) That the government should take necessary steps to ensure that the police forces, the A.R.P. and the civic guards of any invade area are not withdrawn or weakened under any circumstances whatsoever and they are maintained at their post of duty under responsible and patriotic officers till the very last and under every circumstances, convicts, lunatics and other dangerous elements of society should be kept in check.

(4) That groups of responsible citizens in towns and villages should forthwith be given firearms and helped and encouraged to organise self-protection in cooperation with the local police managers of mills, factories and industrial areas might be similarly induced to take up and organise protection of life and property and be authorised to perform the function of civil police in their particular areas or localities.

(5) That even under the Defence Regulations the authorities must not dispossess the citizens of their properties like motor cars conveyances, houses and other necessary articles of daily use without giving them sufficient time and opportunity to make alternative arrangements.

In any case, adequate and suitable compensations must be paid once or without delay for any articles commend for defence purposes, and payment must not be deferred to future date. Least of all there should not be any racial or communal discrimination.

(6) In case of emergency arising out of enemy action the government should in order to prevent the dislocation of industries and interruption of essential services, take adequate steps to classify reover and house the technical and skilled labourers in safe places and provide them with good and transport facilities.[19]

Champaran District Student Conference

The 6th Session of the Champaran District Student Federation was held at Bettiah on the 25th May, 1942, under the Presidentship of Harbans Sahay, M.L.A.[20] The proceedings began with the welcome songs and thereafter Basadeo Pathak, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcomed the delegates and other quests present on the occasion. Mr. Wadia Saheb inaugurated the conference and doing so he, in course of his address, dwelt upon the duties and responsibilities of students at this critical juncture. He laid emphasis upon character building and observed that students should not neglect their studies.

The President, Harbans Sahay addressed the gathering amidst loud cheers. He bitterly criticised the present educational system and said that had they been receiving the right type of education, every one of them would have been a patriot readily willing to undergo the heaviest sacrifice and suffering for the sake of the motherland. The system of education had, therefore, to be drastically changed. The President said that the country had been passing through critical times. All must, therefore, face facts bravely and try to maintain that they

should organize volunteer corps and laid emphasis upon self-protection and self-sufficiency. Mr. Rizvi proceeded to address the gathering and began to discuss Fascism and Imperialism. Sukhdeo Prasad addressed the Conference emphasising the audience the necessity of a powerful student's organization which will combat all evils in education and remove all the stumbling blocks from the road to freedom. He criticised those who trying to disrupt the student's organization for their own self ends.[21]

Political Prisoner in Motihari Jail

Peer Muhammad Munis, a well known Congress Worker and Hindi scholar of Champaran, was released on the 12th June, 1942 from Motihari jail, after serving his full term of one year's rigorous imprisonment under the Defence of India Rules.[22] In course of a statement to the press, he said that there were seven political prisoners in the Motihari jail. All of them were 'C' class prisoners. They were not supplied any reading or writing materials even at their own costs. Several times they made representations to the Bihar Government in this connection but of no avail. The names of these prisoners were Bharat Mishra, General Secretary, Provincial *Hindu Sabha,* Umashankar Shukla, Vishwanath Shramik, Rajendra Pandey, Subhnarayan Prasad, Satyanarain Prasad and Ram Nagina Tiwary. It was indeed surprising that a man of the position of Pandit Bharat Mishra was also treated as a 'C' class prisoner while his own brother, Brijbihari Mishra was class I prisoner in Hazaribagh jail. Several of the prisoners were not keeping good health and bad lost their weight. Vishwanath Shramik had been suffering from chronic dysentry for the last 16 months and Uma Shankar Shukla and Rajendra Pandey had lost their weight and were suspected to be suffering from lungs trouble.[23]

Rajendra Prasad while addressing the Congress Workers of Bettiah on 18th June, 1942,[24] said that the

country was faced with an unprecedented crisis and so the Congress Workers must realise the gravity of the situation and act accordingly. They should sink all petty differences and always keep before them the great ideal of the Congress. It was not proper for them to engage themselves in party factions when big issues were at stake. Services of the people should be their superior concern at this juncture. They should try to strengthen the Congress because in its strength lay the safety of the masses. Mr. Prasad appealed to the workers to leave no stone unturned to make the Congress programme a success.

Rajendra Prasad laid great stress on self-protection and self-sufficiency. He said that he had no objection to allowing local Congressmen to join any coordination. Defence board of any party whether Congress, Muslim League, *Hindu Sabha* or any other organization which might enrol volunteers for the same purpose. After opening the *Harijan Hostel* and inspecting the *Pratap Pustakalaya.*[25] Mr. Prasad addressed a public meeting, explaining and impressing upon the people the need and importance of working out the Congress programme of self-sufficiency and self-protection.

Shrikrishna Sinha, ex-premier of Bihar, while addressing a public meeting at Ramgarhwa (Champaran) on the 23rd June, referred to Mahatma Gandhi's suggestion that British people should quit India and warned the people not to rely on Japanese propaganda that they were coming to liberate India. He exhorted them to unite in the face of common danger and resist aggression with all their might, from whatever quarters it came. He also advised them to organise *Seva Dal* in every village, take *Charkha* and grow more and more foodstuffs and oil seeds.[26]

The Government of India and the Provincial Government in Bihar had been already busy in devising

plans to suppress any attempt to oppose them. On the 13th May, 1942, the Government of India promulgated the Collective Fines Ordinance which provided that "if it appears to the provincial government that the inhabitants of any area are concerned in or abetting the commission of offences particularly affecting the defendance of British India." The Government of India framed a new Defence Rule 27A in June, 1942.[27]

Under the Defence Rule 27A, the Bihar Government forwarded to their Divisional Commissioner, District officers and the I.G. of Police on the 18th July, 1942, a list[28] of more active members of the Forward Bloc in Bihar asking them to proceed against such persons without reference to government if there was material to prosecute them. In this list Dhanrajpuri of Sikta Math, village and P.S. Ramnagar and Siyaram Thakur of Maithia, P.S. Dhaka, were included. They were the active members of the Forward Bloc in the district of Champaran. Kamla Kant Gupta was also an active and young worker of Forward Bloc at Sugauli in the Champaran district. He was the student of Vidya Sagar College, Calcutta.

Quit India Resolution

On the 14th July, 1942 the Working Committee of the All India Congress met at Wardha and adopted a long resolution generally referred to as the "Quit India" resolution. It revised the demand that "British rule in India must and immediately" and reiterated the view that the freedom of India was "necessary not only with interest of the country at large but also for the safety of the world and for the ending of Nazism, Facism, Militarism and other forms of imperialism and the aggressism of one nation over another.."[29]

On the 7th August, 1942, the All India Congress Committee met at Bombay and considered this resolution

adopted by the Congress Working Committee. After two days of discussion it was passed by an absolute majority. The following resolution was adopted: "The All India Congress Committee has given the most careful consideration to this reference made or it by the Working Committee in their resolution dated July 14, 1942, and to subsequent events, including the development of this war situation, the utterances of responsible spokemen of the British Government, and the comments and criticisms made in India and abroad. The Committee approves and endorses that resolution and is of opinion that events subsequent to it have given its further justification, and have made it clear that the immediate ending of British rule in India and for the success of the cause of the United Nations. The continuance of that rule is degrading and enfeebling India and making her progressively less capable of defending herself and of continuing to the cause of world freedom."[30]

The Violent Outbreaks of 1942

In the meantime Mr. Y. A. Godbole, Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar, issued instruction on the 7th August, 1942 (Secret No. 3198-C/152/42) to all the District officers in regard to the policy that were to be adopted in suppressing the violent outbreak that were to follow the quit India resolution of the All India Congress Committee and informed that as soon as the All India Congress Committee's decision was known, the Government of India would decide what action against the movement was to begin. Immediately on receipt of Central Government's signal, the Provincial Government issued a notification under the Criminal Law Amendment Act declaring the All India Congress Committee and the Working Committee of the Congress (though not the Indian National Congress as such) to be an unlawful association. At the same time, Provincial Government "issued similar notifications under

the Criminal Law Amendment Act in respect of (i) the Provincial Congress Committee with its Working Executive and District and Sub-divisional or other local or Subordinate Committee, (ii) the Congress Socialist Party and (iii) other organisations likely to participate in the movement or bodies organised under new names but with the object of supporting and carrying on the Movement". The first "deprive the Movement of its organisation by arresting all leaders" and for this the officers mentioned above were supplied a list in two parts, 'A' and 'B'. The list 'A' showed district-wise more important leaders of the province who were expected to organise and participate with movement, and list 'B' contained the names of the less important leaders only. The lists included not only the names of Congressmen but also the members of the other parties whom the government believed that they were with the Congress in the movement. The Magistrates were to authorised for arresting of such persons about whom they received a signal by telegram or telephone, viz., this single word "ADOLF" on receipt of such message, the Magistrates were kept about to proceed at once to arrest under Defence Rule 132 all the persons named in the list "A" similar action would be taken by the Magistrate in respect of persons named in the list "B" or receipt of the Signal "BENITO".[31]

Consolidated list of Persons in "A" list[32]

Sl. No.	*Name (Champaran)*	*Classification*
1.	Rambaran Prasad	K.I.
2.	Siaram Thakur	K.I.
3.	Akshyabat Pandey	K. & S.I.
4.	Mahant Dhanraj Puri	K. & S.I.
5.	Sant Sewak Prasad	K. & S.
6.	Basdeo Sonar	K. & S.

In "B" list[33]

1.	Deabrata Shastri	C.I.
2.	Harbans Sahay	C.I.
3.	Prajapati Mishra	C.I.
4.	Bishwa Nath Singh, M.L.A.	A.S.I
5.	Kapildeo Rai	S.
6.	Ladli Saran	K.&T.
7.	Ram Prasad Gupta	T.

(Key to Abbreviations)[34]

C	—	Congress
S	—	Socialist
T	—	Terrorist
K	—	Kisan
L	—	Labour
F. B.	—	Forward Block
R	—	Royist

In the morning of the 9th August, 1942, Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders were arrested.[35] Same day Rajendra Prasad was also arrested at Patna under Section 26 (1) b.[36]

On the 9th August, 1942, the Government of Bihar issued some notifications (1-C (P)), 2-C (P) and 3-C (P) declaring unlawful such bodies as the All India Congress Working Committee and its branches, etc., Bihar Provincial Committee of the Congress Socialist Party, the Council of Action of the Provincial Committee of the Congress Socialist Party and all local committees of the Provincial Committee of the Congress Socialist Party.[37]

The arrest of Mahatma Gandhi, Rajendra Prasad and other leaders excited the people of Bihar. In Champaran

also the movement spread like wild fire and on 9th August, 1942, the Congress Offices were searched at Motihari and some papers were seized. Sant Sewak Prasad, Harbansh Sahay, Prajapati Mishra, Vishwanath Sinha, Kapildeo Rai, Ladli Saran, Awadh Bihari Pandey and Siaram Thakur were arrested. There were *hartals* at Bettiah, Raxaul and Motihari on that day and organisers of the movement, namely Ganesh Prasad Sahu, Braj Bihari Sharma, Prasidh Narayan Verma and Khedu Bhai were arrested.[38] Late Kedar Pandey ex-chief minister of Bihar and ex-union railway minister was arrested at Bettiah.

In spite of the arrest of the above noted leaders, the residents of the district of Champaran did not feel cowed down leaf-lets and bulletins were found posted on walls requesting the government officers, particularly the police, to resign their posts. On August 10, 1942, Mahant Dhanraj Puri and two others were arrested. Bhirgu Saran Mishra was arrested on llth August, 1942.[39] The Bihari Provincial Congress Committee sent a letter to Bipin Bihari Verma, Manager, Bettiah Estate, asking him to resign his post immediately.[40]

At Motihari, a mob-stopping the Muzaffarpur train on the 14th August was forcibly dispersed by the police. Railway lines were breached near Jiudhara and telegraph wires were cut. The students of Bettiah High English school demonstrated in criminal courts, and hoisted the National Flag, Civil Court and Local Sub-Post Office building. On the 15th August, a large number of people, while attempting to attack the court buildings at Champaran, were dispersed by a furious *Lathi-charge.* The National Flag was hoisted on the day at Adapur and Ghorasahan police stations. Same day at Bettiah telegraphic communications were cut, train services discontinued, and the bar and *Mukhtears'* Associations decided to boycott courts from the 17th August. A Platoon of British infantry reached Champaran from Muzaffarpur

in the evening of 16th August.[11] On 18th August, the Mehsi railway station was attacked and its booking office was wrecked by a mob. Several police stations were raided and occupied by the people.[12] Now the movement had become a mass movement. And, the government's repressive measures failed to check mass upheavals. The Fire of patriotism was burning in every heart. Students specially played a heroic role in this great struggle for freedom, inspired by the *Mantra*. 'Do or Die'.

Patna Secretariat Firing and its Repercussions on the District of Champaran

On the llth August, 1942, the city of Patna witnessed a memorable but a heart rendering scene when some brave youngmen died by the bullets of the police in the campus of the Patna Secretariat. A big mob had come to the Secretariat and they were raising anti-British slogans. Some of them wanted to hoist the national flag over the Secretariat building. It was day of heroic martydom when some youngmen sacrificed their lives at the alter of country's freedom.[43] The people were determined to hoist the national flag on the Patna Secretariat building, the citadel of bureaucracy was one of the main pillars of the foreign rule in the country. With this object thousands of persons, urged by the zeal of intense patriotism rushed to the gate of the Patna Secretariat at about 2 p.m. the District Magistrate of Patna, the Additional Superintendent of Police, and the Sub-Divisional Officer Sadar had reached there about 1.30 p.m. with a strong force of armed police. At about 2.15 p.m. the processionist, succeeded in hoisting the 'National Flag' at the gate of the Secretariat and for two and a half hours they struggle hard with the police force and tried to enter inside the Secretariat compound in order to hoist the 'National Flag' on the top of the main building. At 4.57 p.m. under the orders of the District Magistrate, who in consultation with

the Inspector-General of Police and the Deputy Inspector-General of Police ordered for firing and as such thirteen or fourteen rounds were fired on the mob by the Gurkha military police. As a result of this firing seven students died and several others were seriously injured and some received minor injuries.[44]

The martydom of seven youngmen at Patna on the llth August at once enkindled a fire throughout the province, which blazed forth in furious flames seeking as it were to consume all that stood for alien domination at the cost of India's due rights of self-determination. Those martyors had, indeed, most zobly vindicated the maxim of 'Do or Die', and many others in thousands soon plunged into the stormy ocean of struggle for liberty. The people of Champaran responded to it and the students of Ghorasahan compelled the school authorities to close their schools. The police station at Ghorasahan was brought under the control of the mob.[45] The processionists hoisted 'National Flag' on the building of the Mission. The National Flag was hoisted on the police station building at Adapur as well as the post office, the excise office, the railway station and Raj cutchery.[46]

On 13th August the people of Sugauli damaged a railway engine and furniture of the Sugauli railway station. The work of damaging the bridges and telegraph wires started there since 15th August. Roads were cut and the destructive activities continued upto 24th August, 1942. The railway line between Sugauli and Semra was breached and telegraph wires were cut. Three railway bridges as well as three district board bridges were demolished. The ditches were dug at many places on the roads.[47]

Sukham Mishra of Sugauli organised August Movement' in the whole *thana* of Sugauli.[48] Laxmi Narayan Jha, Badri Narayan Jha and Ramesh Jha of Phulwaria were guiding the people. Nikunt Jha, Baidyanath Jha,

Rupan Mahto, Bidya Prasad, Kamla Kant Gupta and Saryag Prasad Sah of Sugauli were arrested. On 15tb August, Kamla Kant Gupta hoisted National Flag at Sugauli railway station buildings along with his socialist friends. Another batch of people hoisted the National Flag on the buildings of the Sugauli police station and post office also. On the 16th August, Bhola Sah, Ramakant Gupta and Asharfi Ram were arrested, Champaran district authority ordered shoot at sight Kamla Kant Gupta of Sugauli *Bazar.*[49]

The Sugauli-Ramgarhwa railway line was breached at several places and the telegraph wires were cut. Parmanand Srivastava, Radha Pandey, Sukhdeo Prasad, Nathuni Ram and Abdul Aziz, the local Congress workers of Ramgarhwa were arrested in connection with August-Revolution on 15th August. The villagers of Ramgarhwa placed obstructions on roads, and trains were also looted, National Flags were hoisted at railway station and police station at Ramgrahwa.[50]

The National Flag was hoisted on that day at Adapur and Ghorasahan police stations,[51] Nandlal Singh, Brajnandan Sharma, Ram Baran Prasad, Kapildeo Prasad and Ram Charitra Pandey were the active workers of Adapur and they were arrested during the August, 1942. The Registry Office at Adapur was closed by the local students. Besides indiscriminate arrest of persons by the police, the British troops moved from one centre to another using their repressive means to chastise the national workers. On 19th August, Mr. Marick, a factory-owner of the area, proceeded with some soldiers to Adapur, and set fire to Congress *Ashram.*[52] They visited Panch Pokharia near Adapur and arrested Shyamlal Raut. The villagers tried to rescue him, whereupon Mr. Marick opened fire and killed Yadu Raut and injured Janak Raut and Guguli Chamar.[53] Mr. Marick and his party went to Chauradano and opened fire there on a procession of national workers

as a result of which Dwarika Kahar and Harihar Hajjam died and Jagdish Chamar was wounded at Chauradano. The furniture of the Manager of the Danby Estate and the papers of the Raj cutchery were burnt by the Congress workers. Then the mob went to the railway station and destroyed all its furniture and breached the railway line.[54]

The soldiers went to Raxaul several times and committed various oppressions on the people there. The destruction started at Raxaul on 12th August. The Sugauli-Raxaul road was cut at many places and attempt was made to demolish the Naukathwa bridge near Ramgarhwa. The railway line was breached at several places. On 13th August, Ghorasahan railway station was attacked by the students. They also attacked the Mission building and destroyed its furniture. There was almost complete *hartal* at Ghorasahan and the National Flag was hoisted on the railway and police stations. The local workers under the leadership of Satya Narain Sah and Mathura Ram of Ghorasahan persuaded several police Chaukidars to resign their posts and their turbans and uniforms were burnt. On the 4th August, Kamleshwar Prasad of Nimoha and Baidyanath Lal of Bankatwa raided the liquor and ganja shops at Ghorasahan. The *Swaraj* train was started from Ghorasahan to Bettiah by the students. The controller of the train was a highly educated person who was an office-bearer of students federation.[55]

On August 18, the offices of the excise department and tho irrigation department at Dhaka were burnt by a mob.[56] On August 19, the post office and the registry office were attacked and occupied by the people. The railway line and telegraph wires near Sikta were damaged. In Mainatar police station, railway lines were removed near Marjadwa village. Gokhula-Sikta line and telegraph wires were also cut.[57] The railway lines between Gokhula and Narkatiyaganj were breached. The railway lines were damaged near Bhikhnathori also. The Sekhbana bridge on

the Eettiah-Motihari Road in Majhaulia police station was demolished by the people. The road was dislocated at several places. The railway line between Majhaulia and Sugauli was damaged near village. Parsa and telegraph wires were cut. The Bagaha district board road was cut at several places near village Majhowa.[58]

The telegraph wires were cut between Kessariya and Rajpur. The Kessariya post office and registiy office were attacked and locked by the Congress Workers. The breaching of the railway lines near Kumarbagh between Bettiah and Chanpatia continued from August 13 to 17.[59]

In the Madhuban police station, the district board road was dislocated at several places. The telegraph wires near at Mehsi railway station were cut and pulled own. The railway station of Mehsi was attacked on 38th August and its booking office was wrecked by the people and damaged the railway lines. The post offices at Dhaka, Kessariya, Sugauli and at some other places were also raided[60] during these days. In the district of Champaran, attack on authorities commenced with effect from 20th August, 1942. On that day, National Flag was hoisted by a party of students and Congress Workers on the building of Ghorasahan police station was again attacked on August 24, 1942. On that day, a large mob set fire to the records of the *thana* and brought it under their control. The situation of Ghorasahan was so serious that the police station could not be opened till October 1, 1942.[61]

A mob of about 500 persons under the leadership of Brajnandan Sharma attacked Adapur police station and hoisted National Flag on its building. Due to the helplessness of the *thana* staff their investigation of cases remained suspended for about 15 days.[62]

On 21st August a mob attacked the police station at Sugauli and wanted to rescue two political prisoners. Although their attempts were filled by the police but they

succeeded in hoisting the National Flag on the *thana* building. The *thana* was locked up for a few hours also. On the same day Dhaka police station was attacked and locked up by a mob. It is noted that Dhaka *thana* remained locked up for about 10 days.[63]

Gobindganj police station was attacked on 22nd August and all the records were burnt. Two short-guns were also stolen away from the Malkhana. On 24th August, the *thana* was raided again, under the leadership of Ram Rishi Deo, by a mob of about 20,000 people who brought the *thana* under the control. After locking up Gobindganj *thana,* they raided the post office, the excise office and the Raj cutchery.[64]

On August 25th, Sugauli police station was attacked for the second time by a mob under the leadership of Sukham Mishra. The mob of about twenty thousand people surrounded the *thana* which disheartended the police staff there. Then the mob hoisted National Flag on the *thana* building and locked the *thana.* Then the proceeded to the post office hoisted National Flag on its building and compelled the Post Master to hand over charge of the post office to Sukham Mishra. Being afraid of the mob, the Post Master handed over charge of the post office to Sukham Mishra. The railway station at Sugauli was also raided and all its furniture were set on fire.[65]

The police station at Pipra was also attacked and National Flag was hoisted on its building. Besides, National Flag was also hoisted on the building of the *thana* at Kesariya[66] and the *thana* was locked up. In the area of the Pipra *thana,* the railway station was burnt and its papers destroyed. Here the people had almost their own rule for some days and they had established *Panchayat* courts. There the soldiers burnt the Congress office at Pipra and looted some shops in the *bazar.* When Ranawal Singh of Kurdia and Vindhachal Singh of Pipra were encouraging the people to face the military the latter fired

at them but causing death to none. Ram Mohan Singh of Damodarpur was taken to police custody who was proceeding with a flag in his hand to cut rails and telegraph wires.[67]

It had been decided by the workers of Bettiah sub-division to attack the court on 24th August in spite of enforcement of Section 144, Criminal Panel Code there. Accordingly, there was a big attack on the court on 24th August, when firing had to be opened resulting in the death of 8 to 10 persons and injured to 30 or more people. After the firing at Bettiah there was much excitement and anger amongst the people of Bettiah Sub-division. The result was that within a few days Sikta, Majhaulia and Shikarpur police stations were attacked by the people and National Flag was hoisted on their buildings.[68] Ram Nagar police station was closed for an hour when it was attacked and some of the records destroyed. The police station at Bagaha was also raided and closed for several times. Jogapatti police station was attacked once and closed for an hour.

During the second half of October, 1942, an attack was made on three persons of Adapur police station who had arrested two wanted men. Ghorasahan police station was threatened with a renewed attack. On November 18, four persons of the jurisdiction of Dhaka police station were arrested while distributing leaflets in the court compound at Motihari.[69]

In the Kessariya and Gobindganj police stations two serious incidents took place during the second half of November—in one of the incidents—the Sub-Inspector, Gobindganj fired on a mob with shot guns, when they were trying to rescue an arrested person. In the second incident at Kessariya a crowed of about four thousand people some of them having guns, attacked some mallahas who had taken settlement from the Bettiah estate.[70]

A subversive leaflet, dated on 29th November, 1942 was found in circulation in the district of Champaran

which warned the traitors of the district with the dire consequences of life.

In the Gobindganj *thana* of Champaran district, *the Janta Raj* was organised by the *Rishi Dal* which functioned for about two months. Paras Nath Verma, Narsingh Dubey, Ramashray Dubey and Muhammad Tahir were appointed heads of publicity department, postal department, volunteers department of destruction respectively. In the thirteen villages of the Gobindaganj *thana* Panchayats. The volunteers' party was organised and began to function skilfully under the leadership of Ram Rishi Deo who was called the king of Gobindganj. Ram Rishi Deo toured the different parts of his Kingdom along with the volunteers force. Their main functions were to settle disputes, burn the uniforms of the *chaukidars* and the *dafadars,* control the market and to damage the liquor shops. The systems of espionage was organised so effectively that if any constable or government employee enter this area, he was immediately arrested and deprived of his papers or weapons if any peace and order prevailed in every nook and corner of this area. Disputes, quarrels and thefts came to an end. Once Debi Ahir along with some other dacoits committed a dacoity in the village Khajuria. The workers of the defence party of this village chased them. On being chased they fled to Damodarpur where also they were encountered by the volunteers. Most of the dacoits took to their heels but Debi Ahir was caught, assaulted and killed by the members of the defence party of Khajuria and Damodarpur village.[71]

The British administration at Motihari was feeling uneasiness over the happenings that were taking place in Gobindganj area. In order to terrorise the workers of this area several military *lorries* (Van) began to patrol that area but no trace could be found of any member of the *Rishi Dal*:[72] One day, four shop-keepers of Areraj were arrested without any fault by the Sub-Inspector, Gaya Prasad Singh

who declared that he would also arrest Rishiji next day. This news was immediately communicated to Rishiji by two volunteers. Rishiji was then staying at Sangrampur village. Encouraged by the action of Gaya Prasad Singh the Junior Sub-Inspector, namely, Lal Bahadur along with some constables, *chaukidars* and *dafadars* raided Sangrarapur village especially to arrest Ram Rishideo. Mr. Deo and his party failed the attempt of the junior sub-inspector by arresting him and confining him in a room of the Sangrampur middle school for about three hours.[73] On witnessing this occurrence the constables surrendered their turbans to Rishiji and the *chaukidars* and the *dafadars* took to their heels out of fear. When the news of this incident reached Motihari two *lorries*—containing Tommies arrived at Sangrampur. The Tommies arrested Nageshwar Dutta Pathak and three volunteers but no trace could be found of the whereabouts of the *Rishi Dal*. Thus, so long as the people's government continued in the Gobindganj area, the supremacy of the *Rishi Dal* remained unchallenged.[74]

The Congress workers of Sugauli were courageous and determined as the sound for fight provoked the freedom fighters assembled fully in time. In this connection the name of Sukhlal Mishra (Suguon), Baidya Nath Mishra (Karamwa), Lakshmi Narayan Jha, Sukham Mishra, Rajaji Jha, Nikunt Jha (Phulwaria) and Jamuna Jha (Chhagraha) were called with respect. Sukham Mishra had resigned from the post of supervisor of village uplift.[75] The government discharged Nikunt Jha, Sabal Singh, Upendra Jha (Phulwaria) from the post of teachers.

The local police turned to storming on the 13th August, 1942, Rajaji Jha and Baidyanath Mishra were arrested.[76] This news spread like electricity at the local police station. The blocking of the people was increased from a thousand to several thousands. The arranged gathering was standing with their determination that at no

cost Baidyanath Mishra and Rajaji Jha would be made to go to prison. But the arrested freedom fighters themselves requested, "No such work should be done due to with the condition may be recovered. This was supported by several other Congress workers also. Anyhow the situation could be brought to control. Due to the first arrest of Baidyanath Mishra and Rajaji the fight bungle gave out its fame at the land of Sugauli for the August revolution.[77] All roads passing from Sugauli to Motihari were kept closed. Somewhere bridges were broken and somewhere roads were cut. On the 13th August, engine and railway commodities were destroyed in Sugauli. The wires too were cut. The three bridges on the district boards roads were destroyed. Roads of Motihari, Bettiah, Chapra and Raxaul were due at several places in Sugauli and Ramgarhwa lines cutting of railway lines was continued upto 25th August, 1942. As a result of this railway lines between Sugauli and Semra were destroyed about three miles.[78]

At the time of August revolution, the Sugauli camp had about one hundred fifty Congress workers and volunteers working day and night. The middle school, Sugauli was the centre of Congress workers camp. Sukham Mishra was the incharge of the camp. Mr. Mishra was the chief organiser of the movement in Sugauli *thana*. Jamuna Kant Jha was the second leader of the Sugauli of the August revolution. In this way the land of Sugauli played an important role in the August revolution of 1942. The leadership of Sugauli freedom fighters was done under the courageous and efficient guidance of Jamuna Kant Jha.[79] In this connection it is to be noted that just on the 17th August, 1942. The group of British army after coming to Motihari and Bettiah already made their movement. This group was in the control of Mr. W.H. Marie and were spread over in all the corners of Champaran and were continuing to commit serious tyrany and disorder.[80] In fact, the entire district was terrorised but on the 26th August, 1942 a huge mob gathered on the northern side of Sugauli

station. According to the government notification (F.I.R.), "On the 26th August, 1942, one thousand of Congress workers quite in rage and firing mood took over the possession of the local post office and hoisted the National Flag."[81] In capacity of the leader of the group Sukham Mishra signed on the cash book of the post office. The revolutionarists were armed with *lathis,* spears, deadly weapons along with hammers.[82] One trainee named Tiwaryji of the training centre took away the gun from the camp. Tiwaryji with his group committed robbery at Bidupur railway station. He was arrested on way to Muzaffarpur. The gun was ceased. An enraged crowd burnt all the papers of the railway and the post office. The Post Master stated that all the important papers of the post office were burnt. Due to robbery and the fire events the following persons were declared accused.[83] Thaga Mishra (son of Sukhari Mishra, Sugaon), Dani Dutt Mishra (Son of Narain Mishra), Kantlal Jha, Lakshmi Narain Mishra, Sukhlal Mishra (Sugaon), Shri Kant Jha, Jamuna Kant Jha, Ramji Jha, Lalan Jha, Ishwar Nath Jha, Baidya Nath Jha, Lutan Jha (Chhagraha), Nikunt Jha (Phulwaria), Ram Nath Mishra, Prabhu Nath Mishra, Baidya Nath Sonar (Karamwa), Sarju Prasad Gupta, Jagarnath Prasad alias Dukhi Bhai (Sugauli), Dhurub Narain Tripathi (Nagdaha), Hazari Lal Sah, Chhote Lal Sah (son of Ganesh Prasad Sah), Murlidhar Modi, Sheoram Sonar, Bindeshwari Prasad, Jodha Sonar, Rameshwar Ram Sonar, Parmeshwar Ram Sonar, Bishun Kalwar, Sheolochan Sonar, Yamuna Sah, Yadu Ram, Badri Kalwar, Sheonandan Sonar, Indrashan Sonar (Sugauli), Lochan Ram, Puran Ram, Gopal Ram, Ganga Vishnu Ram, Indradeo Ram, Babu Ram, Arjun Ram (Sugauli), Gunanand Mishra of Darbhanga, Bhagwat Mahto, Lal Bahadur Singh (Kalu Pakar Dhaka), Rameshwari Singh, Indrashan Rai, Jadu Rawat, Bhikhari Ahir, Harun Ahir, Sukhari Rawat, Pyare Sah, Ramphal Mahto, Bishunu

Mahto, Lakshuman Mahto, Bishunu Thakur Lohar, Mathura Thakur, Rupan Mahto son of Ashman Mahto (Shripur), Mukti Nath Jha, Safal Singh son of Bishwa Nath Chaudhari (Phulwaria), Janardhan Pandey, Mohar Ram, Bagur Rai, Raman Ram, Mathura Ram, Chulhai Ram (Sugauli), Gena Kurmi, Narain Rawat etc. This list of accused persons is based on the government records.[84]

In this case those who were convicted and punished for a longer period of time were Shri Kant Jha, Jamuna Kant Jha, Dani Dutt Mishra, Ishwarnath Jha, Baidyanath Jha, Sarju Prasad Gupta, Jagarnath Prasad alias Dukhi Bhai, Durb Narain Tripathi, Lal Bahadur Singh, Singashan Rawat, Matwar Thakur, Rupran Mahto etc. Rameshwar Sah S/o Bhai Ram Sah were declared accused by the Government of Bihar.[85]

Many of the freedom fighters were arrested. Even then Gokul Thakur, Raghunath Mishra (Sugaon), Ramesh Chandra Jha, Ramakant Jha, Kamlakant Gupta and others tried to keep the movement alive successfully during the days of fearful happenings of August movement. After the arrest of freedom fighters of Champaran, Gokul Thakur was made incharge of the district movement. He kept himself safe from the tyrrant sight of the police.[86]

August revolution took the shape of general public movement. The Sugauli police station filed several cases. In those cases one hundred eighty-two persons were declared to be accused. Ramesh Chandra Jha then student of Hazarimal High School, Raxaul, was entraped into several cases of the robbery at police stations. At Phulwaria village in great hardships. Gokul Thakur ordered Ramesh Chandra and Rama Kant Jha to go Sugaon and to take account of the articles which were left by the police and from the houses the articles were removed and also the condition of imposed collective fines.[87] Since both these persons view of prematured age, there was very possibility of their being arrested. If so

happened that both of them were arrested and imprisoned for two years and Section 38 (v) of the Indian Safety Act.[88]

For sometime Lakshmi Tiwary and Brahmdeo Ram of Bhatolia Shripur kept the resolution alive under the direction of Gokul; Thakur of Bettiah was working in Sanskrit school and Brahmdeo Ram was working in the Sugauli middle school. Both of them resigned their posts and devoted their lives for freedom movement. They were also convicted and imprisoned for two years.[89]

Bahadur Sahni, Girdhari Sahni and Amrit Sahni of Mehwa were sent to district Congress office for the movement at Dhekha. They were arrested and sent to Motihari jail Dhanraj Mishra was the incharge of Dhekha Congress office. He had the secret file of the movement. This is why he was arrested and convicted by Motihari court for three years.[90] It had been already mentioned above, how the government machinery felt whatsoever in using various stringent measures to suppress the movement. Hundreds of persons were arrested and imprisoned, a large number were killed chiefly by firing of the military and at some places by the police; whipping was inflicted on many, and heavy collective fines were imposed in different localities. It seems very difficult to note with strict accuracy the exact number of men subjected to these cruel punishments, or to death as martyrs for the cause of freedom and also the exact quantity of collective fines. Some official records are available in these respects.

In a correspondence to the Secretary of State for India, dated the 14th December, 1942, regarding Bihar, the following approximate figures upto the 30th November, 1942 was supplied:[91]

(1) Total number of arrests made 14.478 (2) Total number of persons then in jail was 8,783 (3) number of times of firing was 83 (4) fatal casualities due to firing were 134, (5) non-fatal casualties due to firing were 362, (6) number of sentence by whipping was 196.

The figures of that period reported by the Magistrates of the Champaran district were as follows:[92]

(1) Total number of arrest 653.

(2) Total number in jails 418.

(3) Number of sentences of whipping 6.

Besides infliction of corporal punishment and large scale imprisonment exaction of heavy amount of collective fines particularly in those areas where works of destruction had proceeded extensively and with much zeal, was also another awful reprisal on the part of the government. The Collective fines ordinance had been promulgated by the government of India on the 13th May, 1942, for the whole of the British India authorising the provincial government to impose collective fines on the inhabitants of any area, who, in their view, "are concerned in or abetting the commission of offences prejudicially affecting the defence of British India or the efficient prosecution of war, or are harbouring persons concerned in the commission of such offence, or are failing to render all the assistance in their power to discover or apprehend the offender or are suppressing material evidence of the commission of such offences".[93]

According to a report of the Magistrate of Champaran district the amount of collective fines imposed till the 21st November, 1942, was Rs. 94,500 and collection was Rs. 41069-8-3.[94]

The destructive activities of the revolution of 1942 were directed against such persons or organisations, which upheld the British imperialist system in this country speaking in the House of Commons on the 11th September, 1942, Mr. Amery observed.[95] "The disturbance was particularly violent in Bihar, a vitally strategic area". But such activities were means to a greater end, that is formation of a national government by affecting emancipation of the country from foreign domination.

Indeed, the revolution had a constructive aspect of considerable significance, emphasising on the true ideals of the Indian National Movement. It sought to build up a structure of national administration from the bottom, to be run by peoples' representatives on the wreck of what had been imposed by alien rule with an eye to its own interests.

Govindganj *thana* in the Champaran district witnessed people's rule for about a month under what was called—the *Rishi-Dal* Ramashray Dubey had the leading role in organising it. He was the head of the defence organisation. Narsingh Dubey was incharge of postal work, and Parasnath Verma was entrusted with the publicity work. Muhammad Tahir led the party which was meant for causing dislocation[96] to government machinery.

Various Congress leaflets and circulars contained instructions for the formation of a people's Government based on the ideology of Mahatma Gandhi. A report from the Magistrate of Champaran, dated the 18th September, 1942, mentioned the distribution of one such leaflet in that area advocating the formation of *Panchayats* in the villages to look after the village affairs, cessation of quarrels and litigations, and protection of the poor and hungry. Circular No. 8 pointed out:[97] "people should so mould their activities as would convince them that the supremacy of the British Government was at an end. It should also enable them to realise that they have to manage all the affairs of their country. Hence on the one hand, they were neither to do nor to aid in any such activity as would lengthen the span of British sovereignty. On the other hand, they were to follow a course of such positive actions as would engender feelings of fellowship and love, would provide security to their life and property, would remove hindrances in obtaining cheap foodstuff and finally they would unitedly and fearlessly oppose the atrocities of the British Government ... If they become panic-stricken, then God save them! By doing so, not only they who participate

suffer but a great majority of those who remain inactive have to undergo terrible sufferings and ill treatment".[98] More elaborate instructions for constructive activities were circulated through Bihar Provincial Congress Committee circular no. 12, issued in October 1942.[99]

Village *Panchayats* were up in all villages. They arrange for defence of the villages, settlement of disputes and restrained people from filing suits in Government courts. Arrangements were made to feed the poor and the starving.[100]

During the national movement of 1942, the government gagged the press by more stringent censorship and restrictions. Exactly on the 8th August, 1942, Government of India issued a Notification containing new censorship regulations. These prohibited the printing or publishing by any printer, publisher or editor of any factual news relating to the 'mass moment' sactioned by the A.I.C.C., or measures taken by government against the movement, except the news gathered from official sources or the news agencies or a correspondent registered with the District Magistrate.[101] The Bihar Government strictly enforced these regulations of censorship and made pre-censorship of news binding. A ban was imposed on the Searchlight and it had to cease publication as a protest against government measures. Even the Indian Nation ceased publication on the 6th September, 1942.[102]

Braj Shankar Verma, editor of the 'Yogi', arrested on the 22nd September, 1942 on the charge of reproducing in his paper the pamphlet called "Is the war indivisible!" He was convicted on the 10th October and sentenced to six month's simple imprisonment.[103] The Criminal Investigation Department seized the unsold copies of the Bihar Herald, dated the 1st Dcember, 1942, which published Shyama Prasad Mookherjee's article, entitled "A phase of the Indian Struggle No. 11". The Saraswati Press, Patna, was closed under the Defence of India Rules as it

was believed by the government to be used in printing what they considered to be "subversive leaflets".[104]

The second session of the All India Newspaper Editors Conference met at Bombay on the 5th October and 6th October, 1942 under the Presidentship of Mr. K. Srinivasan. The Chief Press Adviser of Bihar attended it. The main resolution demanding the removal of the press restrictions was unanimously passed. "Even in war time, the press can not abdicate its responsibility as the guardian of public interest and of the rights of citizens. At the present juncture when the legislatures are not functioning in most provinces and owing to penal restrictions public opinion cannot express itself fully, an extra responsibility is thrown on the press".[105]

By October-November, 1942, there was a turn in the tide. Intensity of the movement was decreasing. Really the movement had not died by that time. There was only calmness on the surface. Unmitigated government, repression drove discontent underground and numerous national workers continued secret activities with the sole aim of uprooting British authority and eradicating the evils for which it was responsible.[106]

Secret underground revolutionary activities had already commenced in the different districts of Bihar and persons sponsoring these were trying to collect arms and ammunitions. Two short guns were stolen from Gobindganj police station and one from Sugauli G.R.P.S. One revolver was also stolen from Raxaul police station.[107] Absconding from Champaran district a good number of political workers went towards the Nepal tarai and found shelter and sympathy there in certain quarters. Some of them collected there arms and ammunitions, spears and other weapons.[108]

Rigours and restraints of prison houses did not kill genuine feelings of nationalism. Very often persecution of a faith, religious or national, serves to nourish it. Some

among our patriots, who had been confined in jails from before the out break of the revolution of 1942, or during it, were in fact inspired by a feeling to come out and dedicate themselves to the service of the motherland in that crucial moment, when the bureaucracy had let loose engines of repression to stamp it out. Urged by such motives six national workers, confined in the Hazaribagh central jail, escaped from it on the Diwali night of the 9th November, 1942. They were Jai Prakash Narayan, Ramnandan Mishra, Yogendra Shukul, Suraj Narayan Singh, Gulali (Gulab Chandra Gupta) and Shaligram Singh (Secretary of Hazaribagh District Congress Committee.[109] Circumstances under which such escape were possible are not yet definitely and clearly known. Government's view at that time was that "the escape was facilitated by laxity of supervision in the jail, but the possibility of help from out side is not excluded". To the government this incident was a bolt from the blue. The government also announced "substantial rewards" for "any information which might lead to their arrests", for Jai Prakash Narayan Rs. 5000, for Yogendra Shukul Rs. 5000, for Ramnandan Mishra Rs. 5000, for Suraj Narayan Singh Rs. 2000, for Gulali Rs. 2000, and for Shaligram Singh Rs. 2000.[110]

Regardless of personal needs, not to speak of conforts, these during national heroes traversed dense jungles through various hardships and risks, till after about 45 hours' journey they reached a village where they took their meals through the hospitality of one of its inhabitants. Jai Prakash Narayan was then in bad health and his old sciatica pain had relapsed. So, often in the course of his journey he was carried by Yogendra Shukul and Shaligram Singh on their shoulders.[111]

The message of the new phase of the revolution contemplated by Jai Prakash Narayan, was conveyed at the end of January, 1943, in a circular addressed by this great leader to "All Fighters for Freedom". After explaining

the meaning of violence as a means for complete eradication of foreign domination, be observed : ". . . We have to prepare, organise and discipline our forces. In every thing we do we have constantly to bear in mind that ours is not be merely a conspiratorial action. It is total revolt of the masses that is our objective". So he pleaded for "Intesive work" among the masses peasants in the villages and the workers in the factories, mines, railways and elsewhere, among the Indian Army and the services, and made a special appeal to the students for such work.[112]

What Jai Prakash did with a view to carrying forward the revolution, as he desired, forms thrilling chapter in the history of Indian nationalism. He pointed out to the Americans that the Indians were fighting for their freedom against which they should not help the British Army. The Central Action Committee met at Delhi and endorsed the programme which Jai Prakash Narayan had prepared at Banaras.[113]

In Champaran, the Congress Socialist Party became quite active and distributed leaflets like 'our struggle'. The 'last struggle' and 'The Azad'[114] to propagate their own principles.

With the object of training bands of workers, Jai Prakash Narayan proceeded to Nepal with Sbraj Narain Singh and Vijaya. There he organised the *Azad Dasta* or guerilla bands for serving the whole country. As means for the victory of the revolution against British imperialism, the *Azad Dasta* was to carry on works of dislocation and paralyse alien administration.[115]

Nepal, outside British Indian Territorial limits, was to be the all-India centre of the *Azad Dasta.* Most of the Bihar revolutionaries of extreme views now centred their hopes in Jai Prakash Narayan and many of them proceeded towards Nepal. At a place, known as 'Bakro Ka Tapu' (Island in the Kachar of the river Kosi) was raised a

temporary bamboo built hut, thatched with straw, where Jai Prakash Narayan was to stay to control the central organisation of the *Azad Dasta.* Besides the activities of the Congress Socialist Party, and underground revolutionary activities of the *Azad Dasta* and other groups, to which reference has already been made, silent constructive works were being continued here and their and efforts were being made some, who were outside the prison bars, to carry on national activities. Manuscript leaflets were frequently, distributed asking all classes of people to observe the "Independence Day", emphasising the Congress programme of starting 'Swaraj Loan Fund', exhorting the people to stop paying rent and revenue, to boycott courts, to organise *Panchayat* system, and appealing to the police and the soldiers not to do any act against their own countrymen.[116]

By the end of the year 1942, the government suppressed the movement but the spirit released was subdued. Though, the struggle failed to achieve its immediate object, it demonstrated, as nothing else could have done, Indian's irrepressible will to be free. In short the 'Quit India Movement' resulted in India's independence.[117] The Quit India Movement made a deep impression on the Indian number of the various services in Champaran and whole Bihar including the police. Being swayed by the wave of nationalism, some of the Bihar Government employees resigned their posts.[118]

One of the effects of the August Movement was the communal tangle in Bihar. Whereas the Muslim League under the leadership of Mr. Jinnah had been demanding partition of India, the Muslim of Champaran began to cry for the partition of Bihar on a few occasions there were communal clashes between the Hindus and the Muslims but they were short lived. Another important result of this movement was the formation of various relief committees

for providing legal and financial assistance to the political prisoners' families. A handsome amount of money was collected by Congressmen of Champaran for relief fund.[119]

The ultimate result of the movement was the transfer of power from the British to the Indian hands which took place on the 15th August, 1947, because the British came to the conclusion that it was difficult to keep India under subjection.

Thus the district of Champaran played a prominent role in the national upsurge in the month of August, 1942. The people of the district were so well organised and acted firmly that they deserved our praise. Dozens of police, stations and railway stations were burnt telegraph and telephone lines were disconnected and the government works were completely paralysed. The government adopted repressive measures to crush the movement. Besides indiscriminate arrest of persons by the police, the British troops moved from one centre to another with their Brenguns. According to the government estimate, 12 persons were killed and 44 wounded as a result of military firing in the district of Champaran from 10th to 24th August, 1942. Total number of arrests made was 653, jailed 418 and the number of sentences of whipping was 6. By October, 1942, the British Government through the help of their army was able to re-establish its control over the district. However, the district of Champaran remained in the vanguard in the "August Revolution."

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5

The Provincial Government Under the Act of 1935

The Act of 1935 abolished the Diarchy in the province and introduced Provincial Autonomy. The Act came in force in the province in 1937.

The Diarchy system at the end of the year 1936 yielded place to a new constitutional structure in the province to be based on the idea of the Provincial Autonomy. This involved the transfer of the administration of all subjects in the province (including law and order) from the control of the official bureaucracy to the control of Provincial Ministers responsible to the Legislature. Under the new constitution, the Executive Authority was to act on the advice of his ministers. The new Constitution also provided for the setting up of a bicameral legislature for the province consisting of a Lower House called the "Legislative Assembly" with 152 members all elected on a much wider franchise and an Upper House to be called the "Legislative Council" with 30 members of whom 14 were directly elected, 12 elected by Lower House and 4 were nominated.[1]

THE PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE

The Provincial Executive was to consist of a Governor and a Council of Ministers.[2]

Governor. The Governor of a province was appointed by His Majesty by a Commission under the Royal Sign Manual.[3] The wide powers concentrated in the hands of the Governor reduced the effectiveness of the Provincial Autonomy. The position of the Governor of the Province was still very strong. The Governor was accorded pivotal position in the Provincial Administration. Like the Governor-General, the Governor was to act in three different ways: (1) To act in his discretion; (2) To exercise individual judgement on the 'Special Responsibility' devolved upon him by the Act; and (3) To act on the advice of the popular ministers in the rest of the matters.[4]

The discretionary powers of the Governor were wide and imposing. The Act empowered the Governor in his discretion to promulgate ordinances and to assume the administration of the province by a proclamation which satisfied that the Constitution of the Province could not be carried out. In fact, it was on the basis of this power that a bureaucratic regime was installed in the province of Bihar in November, 939 when the Congress Ministry tendered resignation. The Act also empowered the Governor to make laws for the satisfactory discharge of his functions and such laws had the same force as the Act passed by the Legislature. He could approve or veto the bills passed by the Provincial Legislature. No bill passed by the Provincial Legislature was to become in Act unless assented to by the Governor. The subject like the administration of excluded areas, appointment and dismissal of ministers, appointment of the chairman and the members of the Provincial Public Service Commission, regulation of the working of the Provincial Legislature, prevention of violent and subversive crimes, working of the Intelligence Department and various other questions were included in his discretionary powers. In financial matters, he could decide whether a particular item of expenditure was votable or non-votable. He could restore any demand for grant reduced and rejected by the Provincial Legislature.[5]

Section 52 of the Act entrusted Special Responsibilities to the Governor. In the exercise of this function the Governor was to have the following special responsibilities:

(a) The prevention of any grave menace to the peace or tranquillity of the province or any part thereof;

(b) The safeguarding of the legitimate interest of minorities;

(c) The securing to, and to the dependents of persons who had been members of the public services of any rights provided or preserved for them by or under the Act, and the safeguarding of their legitimate interests;

(d) The securing in the sphere of executive action of the purpose which the provisions of chapter-Ill of part-V of the Act were designed to secure in relation to legislation;

(e) The securing of the peace and good government of areas which by or under the provisions of part-III of the Act were declared to be partially excluded areas;

(f) The protection of the rights of any Indian States and the rights and dignity of the Ruler thereof; and

(g) The securing of the execution of orders or directions lawfully issued to him under part-VI of the Act by the Governor-General was also in his discretion.[6]

The Instrument of Instruction was issued to the Governor to guide him in the discharge of his duties.[7] The Governor had the power to appoint an Advocate-General to give legal advice to the Governor. The Governor had also the powers to make rules regarding the police administration.[8]

In all other cases the Governor was not to act in his discretion or exercise his individual judgement. He was to follow the advice of his Council of Ministers in such other matters.[9]

The following Governors served the province of Bihar under the Act of 1935:

His Excellency Sir James David Sifton vacated his office of Governor on the forenoon of 10th March, 1937 and His Excellency Sir Maurice Gamier Hallet assumed charge of it on the forenoon of 11th March, 1937. His Excellency Sir Maurice Hallet on assumption of office was generally welcomed in the press.[10]

His Excellency Sir Thomas Alexander Stewart, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., I.C.S., was appointed in place of His Excellency Sir Maurice Gamier Hallett, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., during his absence as acting Governor of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. On 16th September, 1938 His Excellency Sir Maurice Gamier Hallett resumed charge of his office of Governor and he remained the Governor of Bihar till 1939 when Sir Thomas was appointed new Governor to continue up to 1943.[11]

His Excellency Sir M.G. Hallet's replying to the welcome address presented to him on the occasion of his first official arrival at Ranchi on 10th June, 1937 said :

"The question of what will happen in the event of difference of opinion in the field of special responsibilities has recently attracted attention and I may take this opportunity of giving my views. It is true the Act gives me power to dismiss a Ministry. It is equally true that a Ministry can resign. But these are very drastic steps and it hardly appears reasonable to suggest that if in a minor matter a Governor differs from his Ministry he should at once turn out his Ministry".[12]

His Excellency the Governor Sir Maurice Hallett said on the prorogation of the Bihar Legislative Assembly and Council Chamber on 27th September, 1937:

"May I say that I extend a specially sincere welcome to the Ladies who are members of this Assembly. I have no doubt that the ladies will do much valuable work for the betterment of their mother country".[13]

The Governor really paid up service to the cause of the welfare of the people. He was really interested in keeping the hand of the British Government over the province.

The British Governors contended to exercise rigid control over the administration of the province. The result was constant conflict and friction between the Governor and the Council of Ministers.

Council of Ministers: The Act provided that there was to be a Council of Ministers to aid and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions except in so far as he was by or under this Act required to exercise functions in his discretion or in his individual judgement. The ministers were to be appointed by the Governor and were to be dismissed by him according to the Act. According to the instrument of instruction issued to the Governor it was advised that the leader of the majority party was to form the Council of Ministers. The leader was to be the Premier and the rest of the members were to constitute the Council of Ministers. The Act sought to establish the principle of a responsible Government in a province. The ministers were to be the members of the either house of the Provincial Legislature. If a non-member was included in the Council of Ministers, he was required to get elected as member of either House. The salaries and the privilege were to be fixed by an Act of the Legislature. Each Minister was assigned one and more departments.[14]

The question of the formation of Council of Ministers in Bihar came up after the election in 1937. The first

election of the Legislative Assembly took place between 22nd and 29th January, 1937 under this Act and the Congress Party came in majority.[15]

The position was clarified on 18th March, 1937. The All India Congress Committee, at its meeting at Delhi, permitted the Congress to from Government wherever it was in a majority in the Legislature if the leader of the Congress Party was satisfied and could state publicly that the Governor would not use his special powers of interference or set aside the advice of Ministers in regard to their constitutional activities.[16] Mr. Sri Krishna Sinha, leader of the Congress Party in Bihar, was summoned by His Excellency the Governor, on 24th March, 1937 to assist him in forming a Ministry. In accordance with the directions given by the Congress, Sri Sinha asked for necessary assurances before undertaking the responsibility of forming the Ministry. These were not given in the form required. Sri Sinha expressed his inability to undertake the formation of the Ministry. As the majority party in the Legislature was unwilling to accept the office, the Governor called upon Sri Yunus as a leader of the next largest party to form a Ministry. An ad-interim Ministry was formed amidst much political excitement and popular opposition.[17]

But a Congress Ministry, however, was formed on 20th July, 1937 with Sri Krishna Sinha as premier. The organisation and distribution of the Ministry were as follows:

(1) Sri Srikrishna Sinha (Premier), Home Affairs, Revenue and Legislative.

(2) Sri Anugrah Narayan Sinha, Finance, Local Self-Government and Public Works.

(3) Sri Saiyid Mahmud, Education, Development and Employment.

(4) Sri Jaglal Chaudhary, Excise and Public Health.

Parliamentary Secretaries

(1) Babu Sheonandan Prasad Mandal, M.L.A., Judicial and Jails.

(2) Babu Krishna Ballabh Sahay, M.L.A., Revenue, Appointment, and Political.

(3) Babu Jagat Narayan Lal, M.L.A., Finance and Commerce.

(4) Babu Jimut Bahan Sen, Public Works and Irrigation.

(5) Babu Binodanand Jha, M.L.A., Local Self-Government, Medical and Public Health.

(6) Babu Sarangdhar Sinha, M.L.A., Education including Registration.

(7) Babu Jagjiwan Ram, M.L.A., Development.

(8) Babu Sayeedul Haque, M.L.A., Excise.[18]

Baldeva Sahay was appointed as Advocate-General. The Ministry in Bihar strongly protested against the circular issued by the Chief Secretary, Mr. Brett, and he had to withdraw it. But the Ministry tendered its resignation to the Governor because of the Governor's refusal to agree with its view point regarding the release of political prisoners. An agreement was reached on this matter in the month of February, 1938 and the Ministry resumed office.[19]

On the outbreak of World War-II in 1939, Indian Nationalists insisted on a clear declaration of war aims by the British Government and the formation of a National Government.[20]

The Government's war policy produced considerable resentment in Bihar as in other parts of India and leaders of all sections of Nationalists raised this voice of protest against recruitment and support for what was considered to be an Imperialist War. On 16th October, 1939 the

Premier, Sri Krishna Sinha, moved a resolution in the Assembly inviting the Government to make a clear declaration, that they had decided to regard India as an Independent Nation entitled to form a Constitution and further to take suitable action in so far as it was possible in the immediate present to give effect to that declaration in regard to the Government of India.[21] This resolution, which was similar to those passed by other Congress Legislatures, was passed by 73 votes to 6.[22]

On this issue the Bihar Ministry tendered its resignation on 31st October, 1939 and on 3rd November, 1939 Governor issued a proclamation under section 93 of Government of India Act, whereby he assumed to himself all Legislative and Administrative powers, and a Constitutional deadlock ensued.[23]

BIHAR LEGISLATURE

Under the Government of India Act, 1935 the Provincial Legislature was an entirely elected body except for some seats in the Upper House. In Bihar it was to consist of two Chambers : (i) Legislative Assembly, and (ii) Legislative Council. The Legislative Assembly was to be continued for five years unless dissolved earlier, while the Council was to be a permanent body, one-third of its members retiring every year. The members of both the Houses were to be elected according to the communal award. The Provincial Legislature of Bihar, like the Legislatures of other provinces, had power to make laws pertaining to all matters enumerated in the provincial lists. Powers of both Houses were to be coordinated except in case of money bills which were to originate in the Lower House. No bill passed by the Provincial Legislature was to become a law unless assented to by the Governor. The Governor could in his discretion refuse to give assent or send down the bill with the recommend nation for consideration or with suitable amendments.[24]

According to the Section 65, the Legislative Assembly chose two members of the Assembly to be respectively Speaker and Deputy Speaker. If the office of Speaker or Deputy Speaker became vacant, the Assembly would choose another member to be Speaker or Deputy Speaker, as the case might be.[25] In the Legislative Council there would be President and Deputy President as the officers of the Chamber.[26]

Section 85 of the Act provided that all proceedings of the Legislature of the Province were to be conducted in the English Language, provided the rules of procedures of the Chamber or Chambers and the rules provided for enabling persons unacquainted or not sufficiently acquainted with the English Language to use another language.[27]

Every Minister and the Advocate-General had the right to speak and otherwise take part in the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council and any joint sitting of the Chamber.[28]

Under the Act of 1935, the membership of the Legislature was considerably enlarged. Members of the Assembly were elected. For the first time, the Assembly was given the power to make and oust the entire provincial cabinet. There were no longer Departments outside its control as under Diarchy, when the reserved subjects were excluded from the control of the Provincial Legislature. In cases, where a Governor acted in his discretion or in his individual judgement or in the discharge of his special responsibility and ignored the advice of the Ministers, the Provincial Legislature was helpless.[29]

The Government of India Act, 1935 failed far short of national expectation, but the Indian National Congress decided to contest the elections. Elections were held between 22nd and 29th January, 1937 and the result was the sweeping victory for the Congress in Bihar. Throughout the province polling was carried out successfully and with

a minimum of disturbance. There were 339 duly nominated candidates for 152 seats of the Assembly, 21 of these seats, including those reserved for members of scheduled castes, were filled without contests. There were in all 457 polling stations and 599 polling booths for the recording of votes.[30] A novel and effective piece of electioneering on the part of the Congress was chartering of an aeroplane during the days of the poll which distributed leaflets urging the electors to vote for the Congress candidates. According to the Election Officer a favourite Congress slogan was "If they feed you with puris eat them, if they board you on motors get into them, but into the polling compartment remember to be careful".[31] And this canny advice was taken to heart literally by thousands of voters, both male and female. But of all the forms of electioneering that were employed, the most effective was the magic appeal of Mahatma Gandhi's name. The elections in the fourteen territorial constituencies of the Legislative Council, 9 General, 4 Muhammedan and 1 European were held simultaneously with the Assembly elections. The number of scheduled castes electors in the 15 constituencies was 64,897.[32]

Electoral Rolls: The franchise was extended. The number of electorate was 2,412,229 or about seven times the size of the previous corresponding electorate. In all the electoral rolls for the Assembly occupied nearly 40,000 pages of closely printed matters and the roll for single general constituency covered 469 pages on the average. Generally speaking, the electoral rolls for the general and labour constituencies of the Assembly were prepared and published in the language in which the record of rights of the locality was maintained. But the draft rolls and final rolls for Muhammedan Constituencies of the Assembly were published in the English Language.[33]

Preparation for the elections: The election office was constituted on 1st April, 1936. It soon started its

operations. The total number of electors on the new rolls was, 2, 412, 229 as against approximately 367,000 on the last electoral rolls prepared under the previous consideration.[34]

Elections: The election of the Legislative Assembly took place between 22nd and 29th of January, 1937. The province was divided into 129 territorial constituencies including 70 general (5 urban and 65 rural), 15 seats were reserved for members of scheduled castes and 7 seats were reserved for the representatives of backward tribes. There were 39 Muhammedan, 4 women, including 1 Muhammedan; 1 Anglo-Indian and 2 European, besides 13 special constituencies including 1 Indian Christian, 4 Commerce and Industry, Mining and Planting, 4 Landlords, 3 Labour (non-union) and 1 University.[35]

Analysis of voting: The percentage of voting was as high as at British elections, and this showed the extent of political interest and consciousness which the elections had aroused. 59.2 per cent of the registered electors recorded valid votes.[36]

Congress in a Majority: Out of total 152 seats in the Assembly the Congress contested 107 and captured 98, *i.e.,* 65 per cent of the total seats and 92 per cent of the seats contested and had approximately 75 per cent of the total votes cast in their favour. The next largest was the Muslim Independent Party with 20 seats. Non-party members numbered 24 and remaining 10 went to others. The Congress thus commanded absolute majority in the two Houses taken together.[37]

The composition of the Legislature of Bihar indicates its composite and varied character. Most of the members of the Legislature came from the feudal of the society. There were few representatives from the general masses and weaker sections of society.

Numerical Strength of Parties in the Assembly

Congress	98
The Bihar Nationalist Coalition	26
The Muslim Independent	20
Muslim League	4
No party	4
	151

Exclusive of the Hon'ble Speaker.

The Numerical Strength of the Parties in the Council

Congress	10
The Bihar Nationalist Coalition	11
Independent Party	3
No party	5
	29

Exclusive of the Hon'ble President.[38]

By-election: During the period 1937-38 under the review there were seven by-elections to fill the vacancies in the following constituencies of the Legislative Assembly:

(1) Patna and Tirhut-cum-Bhagalpur European Constituency.

(2) Bihar Planters' Association Constituency.

(3) Indian Mining Association Constituency (Two bye-elections).

(4) Pakur-cum-Raj Mahal General Rural Constituency.

(5) Chotanagpur European Constituency.

(6) Patna City Muhammaden Urban Constituency.

Of these by-elections, only the by-election in Patna City Muhammedan Urban constituency was contested.[39]

In 1938-39 there were six by-elections to fill the vacancies in the Patna and Tirhut cum-Bhagalpur European Constituency, Bihar Planters' Association Constituency, South Madhubani, General Rural Constituency, Hazaribagh Muhammedan Rural Constituency, Bhagalpur Division General Urban Constituency and the Patna Division Land Holders Constituency.[40]

First Meeting of the New Assembly

On 3rd July, 1937 a notification was issued by His Excellency the Governor summoning the Legislative Assembly on 22nd July, 1937 in the old Council Chamber. Sri (Later-Dr.) Sachchidanand Sinha took his oath before His Excellency the Governor to perform the duties of the Speaker of the Assembly until a Speaker was elected.[41]

Election of Speaker and Deputy Speaker

Members of both the Houses of the Bihar Legislature under the new constitution were sworn in on 22nd July, 1937.[42]

On 23rd August, the unopposed election of Sri Ram Dayalu Singh and Sri Abdul Bari, Congress nominees took place as Speaker and Deputy Speaker respectively. The Speaker took the Chair, the Congress members sang Vande Mataram.[43]

The Speaker replied suitably in Hindi thanking the House which was then adjourned sine die.[44]

On 23rd August, 1937 when the Assembly met for the first time after the election of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, there was a demonstration by Kisans in front of the Assembly Chamber due to which the meeting of the House was delayed for an hour and a half.[45] There was also

another demonstration by Khet Mazdoors on the 15th December, 1937 but this time the processionists remained outside the compound of the Assembly and Council buildings and the business of the Legislature was not disturbed.[46]

Sessions and Meetings: In 1937-38 there were two complete sessions of the Assembly and a third session which commenced on 5th March, 1938 continued up to 23rd August, 1938. The first session which commenced on 22nd July, lasted till 27th September and the second session which began on 1st December, ended on 23rd December, 1937. The protracted third session was necessitated by the heavy legislative programme of the Government.[47]

In all, there were 58 sittings of the Assembly, of which 27 days were devoted to the transaction of financial business; three to non-official business and the reminder to the disposal of official bills and resolutions.[48]

Questions: An abnormally large number of questions were asked during the period 1937-38. Notices were received for 1,860 questions during the year. Of these questions, 1091 on a wide range of subjects were answered, 237 questions were disallowed as they contravened the rules of Assembly, 8 lapsed, 85 were withdrawn and 109 remained pending at the close of the year. In addition 1,579 supplementary questions were put and answered.[49]

Resolutions: Out of 832 resolutions of which notices were given, as many as 207 ranging over a wide field of social and political subjects were included. Ninety-three resolutions received from different members related substantially to the same subject. Only 12 resolutions, however, were actually moved of which eight were carried, three were withdrawn and one was rejected.[50]

Of the resolutions adopted four related to the appointment of the following committees :

(1) Committee to enquire into the causes of the Bihta Railway Disaster and the extent of loss;

(2) Committee to enquire into the administration of Santhal Parganas;

(3) Committee to enquire into the living wages of labourers; and

(4) Committee to prepare a scheme for separation of Judicial and Executive functions.[51]

Budget discussions and voting of demands: The budget for the year 1937-38 was presented on 23rd August, 1937 and that for the year 1938-39 on 5th March, 1938.[52]

As usual the presentation of the Budgets for the year 1937-38 and 1938-39 each took one day. Three days were devoted to the general discussion of the first budget and two days to that of the second budget, while the voting of demands for grants occupied nine days in each case. Apart from the main budget, there were as many as 30 supplementary demands of which a large number of items related to new services. All the demands were voted by the Assembly.[53] Budget was presented to Finance Minister Sri Anugrah Narayan Sinha on 23rd August, 1937. Revenue for 1937-38 was estimated at Rs.4,95,00,000. General discus sions of the budget commenced on 26th August, 1937 and the general discussions of the budget concluded on 30th August, 1937.[54]

Bills

The year witnessed great Legislative activities in the history of the province.

Bihar Entertainment Bill: On 24th August, Shree Anugrah Narayan Sinha moved the Bihar Entertainments Bill proposing Entertainment Tax. Sri Chandreshwar Prasad Narayan Sinha, Leader of the Coalition Party, moved an amendment for circulation of the Bill for eliciting public opinion.[55]

Legislative Officers' Salaries Bill: Earlier the Assembly passed the Legislative Officers' Salaries Bill fixing the salaries of the Speaker of the Assembly and President of the Council at Rs. 500 per month each and of the Deputy Speaker and Deputy President at Rs. 250 each.[56]

Ministers' Salaries Bill: The Ministers' salaries bill fixing salaries at Rs. 500 per month each was passed.[57]

The Assembly discussed the Constituent Assembly resolution moved by the Premier. The whole day was spent on this resolution but no decision could be reached.[58]

Out of 501 non-official resolutions before the House for discussion in the course of three days, the House discussed and adopted only two.[59]

The Assembly rose on 4th September, after recording the first Division of the session on a non-official resolution recommending the establishment of a Degree College at Ranchi which was defeated by 71 to 26 votes after a heated discussion.[60]

The fate of the Constituent Assembly Resolution remained undecided. On 7th September, negotiations were held during the lunch recess between the Congress and the Muslim Independent Party to arrive at a compromise on the Constituent Assembly. The amended form of the resolution was unanimously passed.[61]

After the disposal of Constituent Assembly resolutions the House entered into a discussion on a controversial official resolution, approving of the principle of Agricultural Income Tax. The Premier, Sri Sinha, said that this was only recommended by resolution and hence the Governor-General's sanction was not necessary.[62] On 22nd September, the Assembly discussed this resolution. After a prolonged discussion, it was passed by 96 votes to 27.[63]

The Finance Minister, Sri Anugrah Narayan Sinha, introduced the Agricultural Income Tax Bill on 21st September. The bill was referred to the Select Committee.[64]

Official Bills: On 18th September, the Assembly passed two official bills, the Bihar Entertainment Duty Bills, providing for graded duties on entertainment charges above two annas and exempting educational entertainments and the famine relief fund expenditure bills. The Stamp Act Amendment Bill providing for increased stamp duties on certain documents was referred to a Select Committee.[65]

On 9th September, the voting on the demand for grants commenced. The House discussed the unemployment problems raised through a motion for a cut in Ministry's salaries by Sir Ganesh Dutta Singh. The motion was withdrawn on 10th Sepetember. The whole demand under the head "General Administration" was voted, four cut motions were withdrawn after discussion. On 13th September, Sri Krishna Sinha declared that so long as he held office his Government would not tolerate lawlessness in any form. He was replying to an adjournment motion moved by Mohiuddin Ahmad to discuss a recent disturbance in Sitamarhi when a clash occurred between the police and a large mob of Musahars who besieged the local jail in an attempt to rescue some of the prisoners. It was withdrawn.[66]

The House voted the entire demand under "Land Revenue".[67] On 14th September, the House discussed the Excise grants. The cut motion was withdrawn and the demand was passed. The demand under stamps was also passed, and the House adjourned while the Forest grants were under discussion. On 15th September, the Assembly passed the entire demand for grants under the heads Forests and Registration. On 16th September, during discussion on the Irrigation demand, several members, including some from the Congress Party, drew attention to

corruption in the Department and urged a reduction in canal rates. Members from Chotanagpur urged better irrigation facilities for their areas. On 17th September, the Assembly after two days' discussion passed the Budget Demand under Irrigation. Sir Ganesh Dutta Singh suggested encouraging the appointment of more Honorary Officers on the Civil Side. The discussion had not concluded when the House adjourned till 20th. Sri Shrikrishna Sinha replied to the cut motion moved by a Congress member to discuss the abolition of the Chaukidari Tax on 20th September. Referring to Chaukidari Tax the Premier said that they could not be abolished so long as they served as a link between the villages and the nearest police station.[68]

On 21st September, the Assembly passed the remaining demands for budget grants. The House first discussed the Police grants. The question of Primary Education, Rural and Municipal, was raised by two cut motions.[69]

Bihar Tenancy Amendment Bill: On 25th September, Sri Shrikrishna Sinha introduced and moved for reference to a Select Committee the Bihar Tenancy Amendment Bill. On 27th September, His Excellency Sir Mauries Hallet, Governor of Bihar, addressed the Assembly in the afternoon. The House was then prorogued.[70]

The winter session was held from 1st to 23rd December, 1937 at Patna. The House discussed the Stamps Act Amendment Bill which aimed at increasing the revenue from stamp duties to approximately rupees three Lakhs and a half a year.[71]

Sugar Factories Control Bill: On 2nd December, the Assembly discussed the Bihar Sugar Factories Control Bill which was then referred to a Select Committee.[72] On 13th December, the Assembly passed this bill.[73]

Supplementary Demands: On 14th December, the House passed Grants for Supplementary Demands.[74]

Tenancy Act Amendment Bill: On 15th December, the Assembly took up the consideration of the Bihar Tenancy Act Amendment Bill as reported by the Select Committee. Shri C.P.N. Sinha's Amendment was accepted by the Government and passed by the House. The House was then adjourned. The passage of the Bill became easy because of a settlement between the representatives of Zamindars and Congress.[75]

Money Lenders Bill: On 20th December, the Assembly discussed the Money Lenders Bill. The Bill was referred to a Joint Committee of both the Houses.[76]

On 23rd December, in the Assembly the Prime Minister, Sri Shrikrishna Sinha made a statement in connection with the circular purported to have been issued by Mr. W.B. Brett, Chief Secretary, containing instructions to District officers regarding the procedure to be followed regarding orders from the Ministers, or purporting to be from the Ministers.[77] The issue generated a great political and constitutional conflict. The feeling of the House was assuaged when Premier, Sri Sinha told the members that Mr. Brett had shown regret for his circular.

On 23rd December, a Joint Committee of 24 was formed from members of both the Houses to consider and report on the Money Lenders' Bill and the Agricultural Income Tax Bill. This House was then prorogued.[78]

The following bills were passed by the Legislative Assembly during 1937-38:

(1) The Bihar Legislature (Officers' Salaries Bill).[79]

(2) The Bihar Ministers' Salaries Bill.[80]

(3) The Bihar Legislature (Removal of Disqualification) Bill.[81]

(4) The Bihar Entertainment Duty Bill.[82]

(5) The Famine Relief Fund (Expenditure) Bill.[83]

(6) The Bihar Stamp (Amendment) Bill, 1937.[84]

(7) The Bihar Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1937.[85]

(8) The Chotanagpur Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1938.[86]

(9) The Bihar Sugar Factories Control Bill, 1937.[87]

(10) The Bengal Troops Transport and Travellers' Assistance Regulations (Amendment) Bill, 1938.[88]

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL

Election of President: The first session of the Bihar Legislative Council under the new Act commenced at Patna on 22nd July, 1937. Rai Bahadur Satish Chandra Singh occupied the Presidential Chair whereafter members were sworn in. Thereafter the Council adjourned till the next day, 23rd July, when Kumar Rajiva Ranjan Prasad Singh was elected President and Mr Naqui Imam, Deputy President. The House then adjourned sine die.[89]

Budget Session: The budget estimates for the year 1937-38 were presented to the Council on 30th August, 1937 and those for the year 1938-39 on 21st March, 1938.[90]

Official Bills: On 4th September, before resuming the general discussion on the budget the Council passed the official bills passed by the Assembly, namely, the Bihar Legislature (Removal of Disqualifications) Bill, the Bihar Legislature (Officers' Salaries) Bill, and the Bihar Ministers' Salaries Bill.[91]

Winter Session: (Patna, 10th to 23rd December, 1937).

The Winter Session of the Council commenced at Patna on the 10th December. At the request of the Finance Minister, the President adjourned the Council till 13th December, 1937.[92]

On 23rd December after an hour's sitting it was prorogued by order of His Excellency the Governor.[93]

The following Bills which had been passed by the Bihar Legislative Assembly were passed by the Council without amendment:

(i) The Bihar Legislature (Removal of Disqualification) Bill, 1937.

(ii) The Bihar Legislature (Officers' Salaries) Bill, 1937.

(iii) The Bihar Ministers' Salaries Bill, 1937.

(iv) The Bihar Famine Relief Fund (Expenditure) Bill, 1937.

The following Bills were passed with amendments by the Bihar Legislative Council in 1937-38.

(1) The Bihar Entertainment Duty Bill, 1937.

(2) The Bihar Stamp (Amendment) Bill, 1937.

(3) The Bihar Sugar Factories Control Bill, 1937.

(4) The Bihar Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1937.

(5) The Chotanagpur Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1937.[94]

Proceedings of the Bihar Assembly (Budget Session) (15th March to 31st March, 1938):

The second year (1938-39) of the Provincial Autonomy saw many more legislative activities than the previous one. In all there were 73 sittings of the Assembly of which 62 days were devoted to the transanction of official business and the rest to non-official business.[95]

Questions: Notices of 1,983 questions were received of which 1,538 were admitted. 412 were disallowed and 625 remained pending at the close of the year. In addition 2,000 supplementary questions were put and answered.[96]

Resolutions: Out of the 782 resolutions given, notice of as many as 698 ranging over a wide field of social and political interest were included in the agenda for discussion. Only 16 resolutions were actually moved and discussed of which 9 were adopted by the House, 6 were withdrawn and 3 were rejected.[97]

The Budget: The presentation of the Budget took one day, while 3 days were devoted to the general discussion and voting of demands for grants occupied eleven days. In order to facilitate discussion, a system described as a grouping of budget demands according to their importance was introduced. According to this system the demands for grants were arranged in 6 groups, 5 groups to be taken up on the last day available for the purpose. Out of 890, only 17 motions could be discussed some of them dealing with important subjects, such as the introduction of hand spun and hand woven Khadi uniforms, the necessity of opening an Agricultural College in the province, the policy of Government in matters of appointment of the Wardha Scheme and prohibition. In addition to the main budget, there were as many as 51 supplementary demands. All the demands were voted without any alteration.[98]

The Congress Ministry's Budget for 1938-39 was presented in the Bihar Legislative Assembly at Patna on 5th March, 1938. It showed a small surplus. Sri Shrikrishna Sinha, the Prime Minister, read the budget speech of the Finance Minister, Sri Anugrah Narayan Sinha, who was still in hospital for treatment of injuries received in December in a motor accident. After the presentation of the budget the house passed the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act Bill which was intended to improve the condition of the peasants of Chotanagpur. The house then adjourned. On 8th and 9th March, 1938 a general discussion was held. A feature of the debate was the argument about the relationship between Bengalis and

Biharis in the province. Mr. Monindra Nath Mukherjee objected to Mr. Krishna Ballabh Sahay's reference to the Bengalis as foreigners in a speech in the last session. On 21st March, the House took up the voting on demands for grants. Several token cuts were moved on the demand. On 22nd March, the demand under general administration was passed by the House which then adjourned. On 23rd March, several members ventilated their grievances regarding the drainage system in specified areas and the prevalence of diseases, etc. On 24th March, the need for taking effective measures by the Government for stopping the sale of adulterated and unwholesome food stuffs in the town and railway stations in the province and the general public health policy were discussed through a number of cut motions. On 25th March, for the first time in the budget session of the Assembly a division was called on a cut motion which was lost by 77 to 15 votes. The rest of the supplementary demands, numbering 20 under various heads, were passed after discussion. On 26th March, the Assembly devoted a day-long discussion raised by a single cut motion on the demand under the head Agricultural Improvement. On 28th March, the department of Agriculture was severely criticised. Sri Jagjiwan Ram, Parliamentary Secretary, said that the criticism made had been generally destructive.[99] On 29th March, the Assembly passed three budget demands under heads Veterinary, Cooperative and Industries. On 30th March, the Assembly passed the budget demand under the head Education for a sum of Rs. 67,49,895.[100]

During the Session held at Patna from 1st April to 29th June, 1938 an interesting discussion took place on the Bihar Tenants Relief Bill. In Bihar, Tenancy Legislation always caused conflicts within the Provincial Congress Organisation. Members criticised the bill as entailing hardships on the Zamindars. On 5th April, Sri Shrikrishna Sinha said that the Government could abolish the Zamindari system. The motion was carried without a

division. On 10th May, the Bill was criticised by the Congress Kisan members in the opposition. It was pointed out that the bill had not provided sufficient facilities to the tenants. The premier stated that the Government did not intend to sacrifice the interest of one community for another. The Bill was referred to the Select Commitee and the House adjourned till 13th May. On 24th June, the Prime Minister Sri Shrikrishna Sinha thereafter moved for consideration the bill as reported by the Selection Committee. More opposition members had criticised the bill as ignoring the interest of Zamindars. On 25th June, the Kisan spokesmen refuted the opposition criticism. They said that the Kisans had gained little by measure. On 29th June, owing to an entirely unexpected development, the Leader of the opposition made a submission that he had received a telegram from Maulana Abul Kalarri regarding the reported breakdown of Congress-Zamindar agreement in Bihar. Helped by Rajendra Prasad, the Congress Ministry achieved an agreement with the Zamindar Association of Bihar that was ratified by the passing of the Tenancy Bill in August, 1938. But the Kisan Sabha still remained dissatisfied with the Legislature.[101]

In March, the Prohibition Bill introduced by Sri Jaglal Chaudhary Excise Minister, in the Budget Session was finally passed without opposition.[102]

Also, in April, the Agriculture Income Tax Bill moved by the Prime Minister for consideration was passed with some amendments.[103]

In April, various resolutions regarding National Militia for Bihar employment of the Biharis in the Industries and the conditions of fare labour were discussed. The resolution regarding National Militia was passed.[104]

During May, the evils of the dowry system were discussed by several speakers. The Bihar Dowry Restraint Bill, sponsored by Mr. Sukhla Sinha (Congress), was

eventually accepted for circulation for publication.[105] Various Bills were introduced but not passed.[106]

Federation opposed: On 6th May, the Assembly passed without; dissenting voice, a resolution opposing the Federation Scheme of India.[107]

Proceedings of the Bihar Legislative Council (Budget Session, Patna, 21st March to 2nd June, 1938):

On 25th March, the general discussion on budget commenced. Rai Bahadur Satish Chandra Sinha criticised the Government for showing indifference to Bengali interest and said that the step-motherly treatment towards the Bengalis did not behave the Congress Ministry. On 29th March, a general discussion was made on the budget. Khan Bahadur S.M. Ismail, Leader of the opposition, referring to the tenancy legislation, criticised the Government for taking away what he termed the legitimate right of the Zamindars. On 31st March, Sri Shrikrishna Sinh at the conclusion of the general discussion of the budget made an important speech in which he reiterated the policy of Government on the agrarian problems and other important matters.[108]

On 25th April, the following non-official bills were introduced. The Tenancy Amendment Bill, The Land Sales Amendment Bill, Cess-amendment Bill, the Tenancy (2nd Amendment) Bill and The Chotanagpur Tenure Holders Bill. It was decided to circulate the Hindu Religion Endowment Bill to elicit public opinion.[109]

On 26th April, the Premier presented the Supplementary Budget of 1938-39. On 13th April, the Council discussed the Budget Demand for Grants which were passed by the Council on 29th.[110]

On 4th May, the Council passed the official resolution that the question of collection of statistics of employment should be governed by Federal Act.[111]

On 5th May, the Prohibition Bill as passed by the Lower Hour was taken up for consideration clause by clause. The Council passed the Bill with an amendment.[112]

On 10th May, the Council considered the Bihar Money Lenders' Bill as passed by the Assembly. On 11th and 17th May, several clause were passed and on 18th May, the Bill was passed with a few amendments.[113]

Agriculturist Income Tax Bill: On 19th May, the Bihar Agriculturist Income Tax Bill as passed by the Assembly was introduced. On 26th May, three Members, including Khan Bahadur Ismail, the Leader of the opposition, walked out at the close of the sitting as a protest against the non-acceptance of an amendment to the Bill moved by Mr. Mobarak Ali requiring the exemption of all religious, charitable or public endowments from the operation of the Act. Amendments were defeated by 15 votes to 5. The Prime Minister, Sri Shrikrishna Sinha, said that nowwhere in the Islamic scriptures was it laid down that Wakfs should not be taxed. On 1st June, the Council passed the bill.[114]

Proceedings of the Bihar Legislative Assembly
(Autumn Session, Patna, 15th July to 23rd August, 1938)

Adjournment motions on communal discord: At the outset Md. Yunus gave notice of two adjournment motions to prevent the continuance of communal discord. One of them was admitted and was discussed on 7th July.[115]

The Assembly Act Amendment Bill was passed on 3rd August, with slight alterations.[116] The Assembly also passed the amendment adopted by the Upper House to the members' salaries and allowance Bill.[117] The Champaran Agrarian Bill was passed by the Assembly on 6th July.[118] In July, the Bakast Land Restraint Bill was passed by the Assembly.[119] The House passed the Money Lenders' Amendment Bill in the 15th August.[120]

Proceedings of the Bihar Legislative Council (Autumn Session, Patna, the 15th July to 24th August, 1938).

The Prohibition Amendment Bill was accepted by the House on 15th July, 1938.[121] The Members' Salaries Bill was passed by the Council and the House was adjourned till 8th August.[122] The Champaran Agrarian Bill was also passed.[123]

Restoration of Bakast Land: On 8th August, Mr. Roy Braj Raj Krishna introduced the Restoration of Bakast Land Bill and on 4th August, the Bill was discussed; on 11th August, the Council passed the Bill. On 12th August, the House took up the general discussion of the Tenancy Amendment Bill as passed by the Assembly. And 22nd August the Council passed the Bill.[124]

After this, the House took up the general discussion on the Bihar Money Lenders' Bill as passed by the Assembly. It was prorogued on 11th August, after a long discussion of Supplementary Budget demand.[125] In 1938-39 altogether 56 meetings were held of which 6 days were devoted to the transanction of non-official business in the Legislative Council.[126]

Questions: Notice of 382 questions were received of which 41 were disallowed and 44 remained pending.[127]

Proceedings of Bihar Legislative Assembly (Winter Session, Patna, 16th January to 14th February, 1939)

The Winter Sesssion of the Legislative Assembly commenced at Patna on 16th January with a heavy agenda. The following bills were discussed: (1) Money Lenders' (Regulation of Transanction) Bill. (2) Refund of Cess Bill. (3) Reduction of Settled Rents Bill.

The Premier next moved for consideration a bill seeking to repeal the Bihar and Orissa Mica Act, 1930 which had been enacted in order to check and prevent theft of and illicit dealings in Mica. The Bill was passed.[128]

Sri Anugrah Narayan Sinha, Finance Minister, next introduced the Bihar and Orissa Public Safety Repealing Bill which was passed without discussion. The Bill sought to repeal the Bihar and Orissa Public Safety Act, 1933 and the amending Act, 1936 which was due to expire in 1941.[129]

On 19th January, the necessity for the appointment of an impartial tribunal consisting of officials and non-officials to enquire into the cause of the train disaster near Hazaribagh Road on 12th January, 1939, was urged in the Assembly Speaking for the Government, Sri Srikrishna Ballabh Sahay said the Government were in full sympathy with the object of the motion and would take the matter with the Government of India.[130]

On 20th January, the following non-official Bills were introduced: Sri Jamuna Prasad Singh's Bihar Tenancy Amendment Bill, Sri Tajmul Hussain's Suppression of Prostitution and Immoral Traffic Bill, Sri Yunus' Local Self-Government Act, The Municipal Bill Board, Musalman Wakf Bill and Sri Sukhlal Singh's Dowry Restraint Bill.[131] These Bills embodied some fundamental social and economic questions faced by the people. Most of these Bills were not passed on one pretext or another.

Moving for reference to the Select Committee of his Bill for restraint of the custom of taking or offering dowry in marriages, Sri Sukhlal pointed out on 23rd January the evils of the system. When replying on behalf of the Government Sri Krishna Ballabh Sahay, Parliamentary Secretary, refuted the contentions that the Bill could not be taken up since it involved a change in Hindu Law and said that the Bill could be amended to permit offering of religious Bills. The House agreed to the motion for reference to the Select Committee.[132]

On 23rd January, the House took up for consideration the Suppression of Prostitution and Immoral Traffic Bill. The motion for circulation was accepted by the House.[133]

Bande Mataram in schools: The adjournment motion in the name of Mr. Mohiuddin Ahmad to discuss the situation arising out of the incidents connected with the singing of Bande Mataram song in schools was taken up next. The mover narrating the incident alleged that Muslim students who objected to sing were assaulted by Hindus. Mr Zafar Imam (Muslim League) said that the Muslims did not consider Bande Mataram as the National Song. He challenged Congressmen to hoist the tricolour flag on Government House or the Assembly Chamber. Replying to the debate Dr. Sayed Mahmood, Minister for Education, refuted the charge that the majority were trampling over the minority. He described how the tricolour flag and Bande Mataram song came to be the major symbols of the Congress fight for freedom.[134]

The House discussed a motion of Sri Govind Pati Tewari (coalition) on the firing by the police in Burma and the Darbhanga District, during Bakrid, resulting in one dead and three injured. The Premier said that it had been disputed whether the custom of cow sacrifice existed in that village.[135] If firing had not been resorted to more lives would have been lost. He assured the House that he would consider the points raised by the members.[136]

The next resolution, moved by Mr Harbans Sahay on 8th and 9th February, advocated the appointment of a committee to enquire into the Sugar Factories Control Act, 1937 and the rules made thereunder. The resolution was pressed to a division and lost.[137]

On 10th February, the Assembly devoted the entire day to discuss non-official resolutions, one of which recommended the introduction of legislation for declaring begging as an offence. The resolution was withdrawn.

The resolution urging the Government to issue a statement explaining the steps they proposed to take regarding the removal of untouchability among the Scheduled Castes of the province was adopted.[138]

On 13th February, Sri H. V. Chandra (Congress Labour) recommended to Government to take immediate and adequate steps against the Bengal and North Western Railway authorities for their refusal to co-operate with the members of the Bihar Labour Enquiry Committee. The resolution was withdrawn.[139]

On 14th February, the House agreed to the Finance Minister's motion to circulate for eliciting public opinion the Municipal Amendment Bill introduced by Congress. Scheduled Caste and women members demanded reservation of seats for Scheduled Caste and women on the Municipal Board House. The house adjourned till 20th February.[140]

Budget Session (Patna, 20th February to 26th April, 1939). General discussion of the Budget was resumed on 22nd, and it continued upto 24th. Mostly the opposition members participated in the debate on 22nd. Voting on the Budget demand for grants commenced on 15th March. At the outset the House took up for consideration a cut motion to the demands under the head Police. Mr. K.B. Sahay, on behalf of the Government, stated that the Government had purchased Khadi worth Rs. 20,000 in 1938 and in the year 1939 had placed orders for Khadi worth Rs. 91,795. The cut motion was withdrawn on the assurance given by the Government that they would buy for police uniforms all the Khadi that the All India Spinners' Association could supply. The grant for Rs. 72,45,423 was then voted. All the 24 remaining demands were passed. Voting on Budget demands then concluded.[141]

The Assembly passed unanimously the resolution moved by the Prime Minister on 30th March, which distinguished the excluded and partially excluded areas from the other territories in British India.[142]

On 4th April, the Assembly passed the Bihar Muslim Wakf Bill introduced by Dr. Sayed Mahmood, Education Minister.[143]

Dr. Syed Mahmood, Minister of Education and Development, introduced the Bihar Markets and Dealers' Bill, on 5th April, designed to provide better control. After a brief discussion the House agreed to circulate the Bill for eliciting public opinion. The Assembly then adjourned till 12th April.[144] On 12th April, the House passed the Private Irrigation Amendment Bill.[145]

The House passed into law, on 24th April, the Bihar Motor Spirit Taxation Bill, imposing taxation on all retail sales of Motor Spirit in the province at the rate of one anna, six pies per gallon. The Bill also provided for registration of retail dealers in motor spirits.[146]

Dr. Sayed Mahmood moved for reference to the Select Committee the Bihar Lac Control Bill.[147]

The Government next sought permission to introduce the Bihar Suppression of Immoral Traffic Bill. A discussion arose on a point of order. Khan Bahadur Saghir-ul-Haque, who occupied the chair in the absence of the Speaker, pointed out that under the rules a motion identical to one introduced earlier in the session could not be introduced.[148]

On 26th April, the Agricultural Income Tax Bill (Second Amendment) was introduced by the Finance Minister and passed quickly. The House considered and passed the Bihar Private Irrigation Works Bill as reported by the Select Committee. The House was then adjourned sine die.[149]

Proceedings of the Bihar Legislative Council
(Winter Session, Patna, 24th January to 14th February, 1939)

The Winter Session of Bihar Legislative Council commenced at Patna on 24th January, 1939. Two non-official Bills, the Bihar Tenancy Second Amendment Bill and the Bihar Land Revenue Sales Amendment Bill were disposed of.[150]

On 6th February, the Council refused to take into consideration the Bihar Cess Amendment Bill, 1939 by 11

votes to 8. Shri Maheshwar Prasad Narayan Singh's Bill to amend the Bihar Tenancy Act of 1938 was withdrawn. After a prolonged debate Shri Punyadeo Sharma withdrew the Hindu Bigamous Marriage Bill. In this connection, the Prime Minister said that the Government were opposed to the Bill first because bigamy was not prevalent in India, secondly, it was impossible to restrict people marrying outside the province.[151]

The Council commenced the discussion of non-official resolution on 7th February, moved by Khan Bahadur Ismail for advancing loans to sufferers of the earthquake. On 8th February, a resolution moved by Shri Satish Chandra Sinha recommended to the Government a request for constituting the Chotanagpur Division and Santhal Parganas districts into a separate Governor's province. On 10th February, the House unanimously passed the Mica Repealing Bill after a short discussion. The Public Safety Act Repeal Bill was also passed unanimously. Agriculture Income Tax Bill was passed unanimously on the same date. The Money Lenders (Regulation of Transanction) Bill was then unanimously passed. On 14th February, Rai Brij Raj Krishna moved that the Bihar Private Irrigation Works (Amendment) Bill and the Bihar Irrigation, Drainage, Agriculture, Land Reclamation, Sanitary Improvement and Flood Alleviation Works Bill be referred to a Joint Select Committee. The House was adjourned till 20th February.[152]

The question of Bande Mataram was also raised in the Council.[153]

May Session (Patna, 4th to 18th May, 1939)

The May Session of the Council commenced on 4th May. The House considered the appointment of a Joint Select Committee of both the Chambers for reporting on the Bihar Municipal Amendment Bill, 1939. The resolution was passed after a short discussion on the merits of the

new system of joint electorates with reservation of seats for minorities, as envisaged by the Municipal Amendment Bill. Khan Bahadur Ismail, leader of the opposition, protesting against the system, said that it was not acceptable to Muslims. On 8th and 9th May, the Council passed the Bihar Agriculture Income Tax (Amendment) Bill and considered and passed Private Irrigation Works (Amendment) Bill. On 11th May, Rai Brij Raj Krishna, Leader of the Congress Party, moved the Motor Spirit Taxation Bill which was passed on 15th May.[154]

Proceedings of the Bihar Legislative Assembly (Autumn Session, Patna, 18th September to 16th October, 1939)

The Autumn Session commenced on 18th September, 1939. Three adjournment motions were sought to be moved but were ruled out of order by the Speaker: one of them sought to discuss the occurrence of August, 1939 relating to a meeting held in connection with the visit of Subhash Chandra Bose.[155]

The Finance Minister later presented the first Supplementary Budget for 1939-40.[156] The House next passed the Primary Education Bill.[157]

Tenure Holders' Relief Bill. The Tenure Holders' Relief Bill sought to confer on the Tenure Holders the right and privilege to cultivate their lands themselves, being the same as had been given to occupancy ryots through the Tenancy Act.[158]

On 19th September, four non-official resolutions were moved and withdrawn after a short discussion. The second resolution sought an amendment of the land alienation provision of the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act with a view to preventing transference of land from non-Christian aboriginals to Christian aboriginals. The resolution was withdrawn after a long discussion.[159]

On 21st September, two official Bills, the Bihar Court Fees Amendment Bill and the Chotanagpur Tenure Holders' Rent Account Bills were quickly passed.[160]

On 13th October, the Assembly passed the Bihar Dowry Restraint Bill which was a non-official measure penalising taking of dowry worth more than Rs. 101 in cash or kind before or during a marriage. The passage of this bill satisfied a long-standing demand of the members of the Legislative Assembly.[161]

An important measure passed without a division was the Muslim Wakfs Bill seeking a better administration of Muslim Trust Estates. The House agreed to the amendments made by the Upper House to the Court of Wards Amendment Bill and adjourned.[162]

Resolution on War. On 16th October, Sri Shrikrishna Sinha, Premier moved the following resolutions relating to war.

"This Assembly regrets that the British Government had made India a participant in the War between Great Britain and Germany without the consent of the people of India and further in complete disregard of Indian opinion passed laws and adopted measures curtailing the powers and activities of the Provincial Government".[163]

The Assembly further recommended that all war measures in the province should be taken with the consent of and executed through the Provincial Government. Khan Bahadur Saghir-ul-Haque moved an amendment to the resolution to the effect that the concurrence of the Muslim community and the other minorities should be obtained in framing an independent constitution and other matters relating to the Governance of India. Muhammad Abdul Majid stated that concrete demands should be made and in the event of their non-fulfilment the country should decide on the future course of action.[164]

Proceedings of the Bihar Legislative Council (Autumn Session, Patna, 25th September to 14th October, 1939)

The Autumn Session of the Bihar Legislative Council commenced at Patna on 25th September, 1939. Eight non-official Bills were introduced.[165]

The Government having raised the objection that the Upper House was not competent to initiate taxation proposals, the Agricultural Income Tax (Second Amendment) Bill was withdrawn by its sponsor.[166]

An adjournment motion was sought to be moved by Mr. Mobarak Ali to discuss the inadequate measures taken for the protection of the inhabitants of the province. He said that the people of Bihar were exposed to a grave danger consequent upon the declaration of war by his Majesty's Government against Germany.[167]

On 14th October, the Council was prorogued sine die after passing three official Bills, namely, the Relief Fund Amendment Bill, the Places of Pilgrimage Amendment Bill and the Court Fees Amendment Bill.[168]

After the resignation of Congress Ministry on 31st October, 1939 the process of Self-Government in the province of Bihar received a set back. The Provincial Legislature under the Act of 1935 played a dominant and constructive role in the history of the province from 1937 to 1939. The Legislature passed a number of bills to improve the conditions of the farmers and to bring social changes. The Tenancy Acts of 1937 and 1938, the Champaran Agrarian Act, 1938, the Bihar Agricultural Income Tax Acts 1937 and 1939, the Bihar Money Lenders Act of 1938, the Chotanagpur Tenency Act, 1938 and several other legislations were passed to remove agrarian discontent. The legislation regarding the agrarian reforms remained a matter of great conflict between the Congress Government and Kisan Sabhas. They also created a difference of opinion among the Congress members and disrupted the unity of

the Congress party. The leaders of the Kisan Sabha in various districts began agitation against the agrarian policy of the ministry. Thus in Bihar the political struggles began to be expressed in terms of idealogy and economic class.[169] Legislation relating to social changes like abolition of dowry and beggary, introduction of prohibition, reorganization of wakfs and religious trusts as well as restriction on prostitution led to interesting debates. The struggle between the Congress members and the Muslim members often took a communal shape. The questions like the introduction of Urdu in courts and offices, abolition of cow slaughter and the singing of Bande Mataram created conflict and clash on communal lines. However, by and large, the Provincial Legislature approved and passed many legislations and resolutions for the reconstruction and reform of the provincial economy and society.

THE JUDICIARY

Constitution of High Court

Section 220 of the Act of 1935 provided that High Court was to be a court of record and was to consist of a Chief Justice and such other judges as His Majesty might from time to time deem it necessary to appoint provided that the judges so appointed together with any additional judges appointed by the Governor-General were at no time to exceed the maximum term fixed by His Majesty. The former statutory provision that not fewer than one third of the judges of any High Court must have been called to the English, Scottish or Irish Bar, and that no fewer than one third must be the members of the Indian Civil Service was abrogated.[170]

Every judge was to hold office until he attained the age of sixty. It was provided that:

(a) A judge might resign under his hand addressed to the Governor; and

(b) A judge might be removed from his office by His Majesty by warrant under the Royal Sign Manual on the ground of misbehaviour or of infirmity of mind or body, if the judicial committee of the Privy Council on reference being made to them by His Majesty report that the Judge ought on any such ground to be removed.[171]

Qualifications for a Judge of the High Court

A person was not qualified for appointment as Judge of a High Court unless he: (a) was a barrister of England or Northern Ireland of at least ten years standing or a member of the Faculty of Advocates in Scotland of at least ten years standing; or (b) was a member of the Indian Civil Service of at least ten years standing who had for at least three years served as or exercised the powers of a District Judge; or (c) had for at least five years held a judicial office in the British India not inferior to that of a subordinate judge of a small cause court; or (d) had for at least ten years been a pleader of any High Court or of two years or more of any such courts in succession.[172]

Jurisdiction: The jurisdiction and powers of the High Courts with respect to subordinate courts were not altered by the Act.[173]

Transfer of Cases to the High Court for Trial

A High Court might transfer to itself for trial a case pending in an inferior court if the case involved or was likely to involve the question of validity of any Federal or Provincial Act on application by the Advocate General of the federation.

Jurisdiction in Revenue Matters

Until otherwise provided by Act of the appropriate legislature no High Court was to have any original

jurisdiction in any matter concerning the revenue or any Act ordered or done in the collection thereof according to the usage and practice of the country.[174]

Control and Expenses of High Courts

The administrative expenses of a High Court were to be charged upon the revenues of the province.[175]

The High Court at Patna remained more or less on the same pattern as it had been continuing from the time of its inception. Now the Provincial High Court of Bihar had jurisdiction only within the territory of the province because Orissa had been separated from it in 1936.

The following Chief Justices and other Justices served the High Court under the new constitutional provision.

Chief Justices: Sir Courtney Terrell, Kt. (1928-1938); Hon'ble A.T. Harries, (1938-1943). *Puisne Judges:* Hon'ble Mr. A.W.E. Wort, Mr. S. Fazl Ali. Mr. J.F.W. James, Sir Khaja M. Noor, Mr. J.F.W. James, Mr. S.V. Dhavle, Mr. C.M. Agrawal, Mr. S.P. Verma, Mr. F.G. Rowland, Mr. F. Manohar Lal (Additional), Mr. S.C. Chatterjee (Additional).[176]

Changes: An important amendment was made in the High Court Rules during the year 1935-36, which gave facilities to Press Reporters and representatives of approved Newspapers to get seats near the bench and to inspect and obtain copies of judgement under certain conditions.[177]

At the High Court, the Hon'ble Sir Courtney Terrell, Kt. (Barrister at Law) continued to hold the office of the Hon'ble Chief Justice, while the Hon'ble Sir Stewart McPherson, Kt., C.I.E., I.C.S., returned from the Bench with effect from 21st August, 1936 and was succeeded by the Hon'ble Mr. Justice F.G. Rowland.[178]

The Hon'ble Sir Courtney Terrell, Chief Justice of the Patna High Court, was allowed leave from 9th April to 5th

May, 1938 and the Hon'ble Mr Justice A.W.E. Wort was appointed to act as Chief Justice during this period. The Hon'ble Sir Courtney Terrell died on 7th May, 1938 while on leave in England. The Hon'ble Mr. Justice Fazl Ali, Bar-at-Law, was appointed to perform the duties of the Chief Justice from 14th May to 17th May, 1938 while the Hon'ble Mr Justice A.W.E. Wort, Bar-at-Law, was appointed to act as Chief Justice from 18th July, 1938. The Hon'ble Sir A.T. Harries was appointed as the permanent Chief Justice of the High Court and assumed charge of his office on the 10th October, 1938.[179]

Two temporary judgeships were created in the Patna High Court, one for the period from 20th September, 1937 to 27th September, 1938 and the other for the period from 20th November, 1938 to the commencement of the long vacation in 1939. Mr. Justice Manohar Lal was appointed to act as an Additional Judge of the Patna High Court in the former vacancy and Mr. Justice Subodh Chandra Chatterji was appointed to the latter vacancy.[180]

The High Court continued to play an important part in the Judicial administration of the province.

The Provincial Government under the Act of 1935 could not work for a long time. The Governor did not extend cooperation to the Premier of Bihar, Sri Shrikrishna Sinha, and to the other Ministers. Mahatma Gandhi rightly declared in 1939 that the Governor played a game. In 1938 there occurred a clash between the Governor and Ministers of Bihar. The Congress Ministers of Bihar were determined to release the political prisoners but the Governor-General issued a directive to the Governor not to accept the advice of the Ministers. The Ministers resigned in protest. The deadlock was overcome by negotiation and of a compromise evolving a formula according to which the Governor and Ministers agreed to release the prisoners gradually. The Congress Ministry in Bihar introduced reforms in the field of education, public health, rural life and Local Self-

Government. A large number of laws relating to prohibition, education, agricultural indebtedness, cottage industries, rural development and tenant-landlord relations were passed. Though the Congress Ministry established a commendable achievement, it decided to quit the office in October, 1939 as a protest against the war policy of the British Government. On the resignation of the Congress Ministry, the Governor of Bihar proclaimed emergency and assumed internal authority in his hand. With this ended the second phase of the growth of responsible Government in Bihar. However, a study of the Legislative process of both the Houses of Legislature showed that most of the members were politically conscious and alert. They took an active part in the Legislative process and contributed to the welfare of the people of the province. The work of the High Court under the Act of 1935 was also constructive and satisfactory.

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6

Social Changes in Bihar between the Two World Wars

Bihar has been unique from social and cultural points of view. Its society and institutions have been pluralistic in character. Though the Hindus dominated, Muslims and Christians also formed significant parts of society. Among the Hindus also there has not been a uniform social pattern. The Hindus of Mithila and the other parts of the state differed from each other in social classification and custom. The Muslims were found in parts of the state. Christians formed part of tribal population of Chotanagpur and the Santhal Parganas. The Adivasis of Chotanagpur and the Santhal Parganas had a different social as well as cultural pattern. Among all social groups and classes, a process of synthesis began during the close of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The liberal forces of modernisation, which had inaugurated a new era in Indian history, produced its impact in Bihar as well. This process continued even during the period between the two world wars. As the Hindus formed about seventy-seven per cent of the population, the impact of social and religious changes was among them more profound and widespread. It was the high class and educated Hindus who were mostly affected. Among the Muslims the influence of the Wahabi Movement was profound. The liberalization of the

Muslim Society, began by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, had its repercussions in Bihar as well. With the advent of Christianity proselytizing religion, education, social welfare and philanthropic activities began among the tribals and Adivasis. The foreign missionaries played an important part in changing the social and cultural life of the Adivasis. Consequently, the traditional character or social and cultural life of Bihar began to yield to a new phase under the impact of powerful renaissance movement. The First World War also accelerated the process of social and cultural changes, particularly in the urban areas of Bihar.

As the whole nation began to respond to the impact of Western science, technology, introduction of ideas of democracy and liberalism, the reforming zeal of Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society and the immense wave of nationalism, Bihar could not be free from the operation of these modernizing forces. The social and cultural movement launched by Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Aurobindo could not do otherwise than have a profound influence in Bihar. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the father of Indian renaissance who began the Brahmo Samaj Movement, had begun his career as a Serishtedar in the office of the Deputy Commissioner of Ramgarh, in the Hazaribagh district of Bihar. Hence the ideas of Raja Ram Mohan Roy spread among the higher classes in Bengal and Bihar. Brahmo Samaj Movement which was the earliest form of protestant Hinduism in modern India had also produced its influence in the modernization of Bihar. It sought to correct certain vagaries and superstitions to simplify worship by resorting to strict monotheism without any image of God.

The number of converts were small, but their significance was great because they belonged to upper class and were mostly intellectuals. It was not confined among the Bengali families only. The Arya Samaj Movement of

Swami Dayanand Saraswati had also produced its impact on the people of Bihar. The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College and Schools in Bihar were established by it. According to the Census Report of 1921 there were 4,578 Arya Samajists, and 794 Brahmo Samajists, in Bihar. The Arya Samajists worked for social changes. They were active in Patna. Brahmo Samaj also exerted the same influence on the intellectual and social life of Bihar. Bhagalpur, Patna, Ranchi, Gaya and Hazaribagh were main centres of its activities. It worked for women's education and social reform. The Bihar Theosophical Federation also began a campaign for social reform and development of education. Annie Besant had a close contact with Bihar. She had come to Patna in 1910. The meeting of the Bihar Theosophical Federation at Patna and Purnea during 1918 had drawn a large number of people. Many branches of this organisation were set up in Bihar. The teachings of Rama Krishna and Swami Vivekananda also influenced many people. In 1922, three branches of the Rama Krishna Mission were established at Patna, Gaya and Deoghar. The Rama Krishna Mission tried to spread education, medical facilities and help to the poor and affected the life of the people of Bihar. They continued their work of social reform. In 1931, it was reported that the Arya Samaj was working for two decades for the improvement of the conditions of widows and orphans by opening Vidhwa Ashram and Anathalaya. During the same period Theosophical Society was also working for social and religious reforms. The Rama Krishna Mission also played a constructive role in bringing about social changes in the province during the period between the two world wars.

Religion

Bihar was inhabited by various religious groups and classes. The vast majority consisted of Hindus. Generally speaking Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Arya Samajists,

Vaishnavas etc., were comprehended into the term of "Hindu". The Muslims, Christians and tribals, however, formed distinct categories. The census figures gave the following details about the religious classification of the people:

General religious distribution: The statement below shows the distribution of various religions per 10,000 persons in Bihar and Orissa.

Table 6.1: Distribution of Religion in Bihar and Orissa

Religion	*Number per 10,000 population*		*Increase of percentage*
	1921	1931	1921-31
Hindus	8326	8318	11.4
Muslims	976	1012	15.5
Tribal religion	616	569	3.1
Christian	80	98	37.4
Others	2	3	37.8

Out of the total population of the province 35,206,352 or 83.2 per cent were Hindus. As already explained this term included such sects as Brahmos, Aryas and Deo Samajists, as well as a large number of aboriginals and semi-aboriginals who claimed Hinduism as their religion. The Hindus formed an absolute majority in the population of every district of the province except Singbhum and the Santhal Parganas. In these two districts also they were more numerous than any other single community including "Tribal Religions" which brought them close together and in combination with Muslims and Christians, etc. claimed just over 50 per cent of the whole. As Table 6.1 shows, the preponderance of Hindus was most overwhelming in the natural division of North Bihar and Orissa, where they

numbered over 95 per cent of the population of each district.

Muslims: The number of Muslims in Bihar and Orissa was 4,284,306 or 10.1 per cent of the total population. They were at their maximum strength in north of the province and they grew steadily fewer and fewer as one travelled from north to south. In Purnea the Muslim were commonly reported to be descendants of some hill tribes who were converted to Islam during the medieval period. In Purnea district there were 886,368 Muslims or rather more than one-fifth of the whole Muslim population of Bihar and Orissa in 1931.

The rate of natural increase was more rapid among Muslims than among Hindus. This is not necessarily the same thing as to say that the natural fertility of Muslims was greater. The absence of restriction against marriage of Muslim widows would be a contributory cause of the more rapid growth of that community.

Tribal religion: The tribal people had their own religion. Most important tribes of the province were Ho, Kharia, Khond, Munda, Oran and Santal.

Christians: In 1931 there were 416,726 Christians in the whole province, one person in every hundred being a follower of this religion. Included in this total were 6,380 Europeans or members of allied races coming from Armenians and 6,638 Anglo-Indians who were persons of mixed descent. It is clear that the greater part of this population figure was due to conversions and not to natural increase. It is well known that the primitive tribes of the province furnished the most fruitful field for Christian missionaries. The number of Indian Christians was about 403,700. Of the Indian Christians no fewer than 261,776 or 65 per cent of the whole number were enumerated in a single district of Ranchi.

Sikhs: The Sikhs had, however, increased in number from 1,558 to 5,869 since the census of 1921. This was due primarily to the attraction of Jamshedpur. The Sikhs of Sasaram were of two kinds, Munarias or Munas. The latter were less orthodox of the two and generally returned themselves as Hindus.

Jains: The number actually recorded in 1931 was 4,052, which was lesser by 558 than the number recorded 1921.

Buddhists: In Bihar despite its close historical connection with the Buddhist religion to which the sacred shrine at Gaya bore testimony, Buddhism as an indigenous religion did not survive. Out of 2,295 persons returned as Buddhists in 1931 census 1,768 were found in the Orissa State and the neighbouring district of Cuttack. In the province as a whole there were 547 more Buddhists than in 1921.

Others including Kumbhipatias: Of the 264 Zoroastrians (Parsis) enumerated in 1931 census, well over half were recent immigrants into Jamshedpur. The Jews in the province numbered 24 of whom 18 came from Ranchi district. Only 15 persons subscribed to "indefinite beliefs" such as agnosticism or atheism. In the census in 1921, 1,231 persons had adopted this designation, but the number later declined to 271 only. It was observed in the 1921 census report that the practice of intermarriage with Hindu left the door open for an easy return to Hinduism.

Classification of the Hindus

According to the census of 1931, the population of various caste groups in Bihar and Orissa were as given below:

Brahmins	2,100,000
Depressed Hindus	6,500,000

Non-depressed Hinduised aboriginals	2,900,000
Other Hindus	23,700,000
Total	35,200,000

Ten outstanding castes

There were in Bihar and Orissa, ten castes (or more correctly nine castes and a tribe) which contained over a million persons each. Goala 3,455,141; Koiri 1,301,988; Brahaman 2,101,287; Chamar 1,296,001; Santal 1,712,131; Dusadh 1,290,496; Kurmi 1,452,724; Teli 1,210,496; Rajput 1,412,440; and Khandait 1,010,146.

Goalas attained their maximum strength in the district of Darbhanga, where there were no fewer than 400,000 of them. Like the Goalas, Brahamans were at their strongest in Darbhanga (321,382) as well as in Shahabad.

Main castes and tribes which increased their numbers by more than 15 per cent during the decade 1921 to 1931 were:

Caste	*Percentage increased*	*Caste*	*Percentage increased*
Rajwar	25.2	Savor	18.7
Baniya	23.6	Harijan	18.7
Dom	22.8	Ho	18.6
Khandait	22.4	Jolaha	17.0
Kolta	20.6	Kharia	16.8
Kewat	19.8	Santal	15.9
Munda	19.6	Bauri	15.2
Pan	19.1		

The number of Santals enumerated in Bihar and Orissa in the census of 1931 was 1,712,133. They were easily the largest of the primitive tribes found in the

province and they outnumbered every Hindu caste except the Goalas and the Brahmins.

Principal castes

The most numerous Hindu castes were Ahirs or Goalas, Kurmis, Babhans, Dusadhas, Kahars, Koiris, Rajputs, Chamars and Telis. Next in numerical strength were Barhis, Brahamans, Dhanuks, Hajjams, Kanus, Musahars, Pasis and Kayasthas.

The following 31 castes and tribes had been treated as "Depressed Class", according to the census of 1931:

Bauri, Dhobi, Gokha, Keld, Musahar, Tun, Bogta, Dom, Halkhor, Kuraria, Nat, Bhuiya, Dusadh, Hari, Labhegi, Pan, Bhumij, Ghasi, Jrika, Mahuria, Pasi, Chamar, Ghusuria, Kandro, Mangan, Rajwar, Chaupal, Godra, Kanjar, Modhi, Siyal.

Population distribution of 22 Hindu castes and 1 Muslim caste in 1931 in the 16 districts of Bihar is given in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: Principal Castes of Bihar

Name of Caste	*Percentage of the Population*	*Total population* 3,07,47,166
Goala (Gope or Ahir) (B.C.)	10.78	
Brahmin (U-C.)	4.74	
Rajput (U.C.)	4.27	
Koiri (B.C.)	4.20	
Dusadh (S.C.)	4.17	
Chamar (S.C.)	4.05	
Kurmi (B.C.)	3.36	
Julaha (A Muslim Caste, sub-group)	3.01	
Sabhan (or Bhumihar) (U.C.)	2.89	

Teli (B.C.)	2.77
Musahar (S.C.)	2.32
Dhanuk (B.C.)	1.77
Kahar(BC.)	1.66
Tanti (S.C.)	1.66
Kahu (B.C)	1.64
Mallah (S.C.)	1.49
Hajjam (B.C.)	1.40
Kumhar (B.C.)	1.32
Kayastha (U.C.)	1.15
Bania (B.C.)	1.04
Dhobi (S.C.)	0.82
Pasi (S.C.)	0.55
Dom (S.C.)	0.41
Total No. of castes: 23	Total percentage: 61.47

Caste Organisation

Another sign of the times was a growing caste consciousness, which was specially to be found in the upper ranks of Sudras. The Caste Sabha to advance the social status of the lower castes was not a new phenomenon, but it had become very much more common during the last decades from 1931. In most cases the procedure was more or less uniform. A new name was selected for the caste, its members were adjured to adopt the sacred thread, and various resolutions were passed dealing with such questions as food and drink, the abandonment of "degrading" occupations, postponement of the age of marriage, etc. The attitude of the higher castes towards these movements was at first definitely hostile. The wearing of the sacred thread, for example, aroused no little resentment. But later on this attitude appeared to have been considerably modified. According to some accounts

the former hostility had given place to indifference. Others held that these activities were still viewed with a "Lachrymose" eye, even though they no longer provoked active opposition. One correspondent roundly declared that "the Brahmins who got fees were rather encouraging them, though they refused to consider their social status improved in any way". The principal item in the programme which was still liable to give rise to trouble was that which related to the abandonment of 'begari' and other menial work. A Sub-Deputy Collector with considerable experience of conditions in Palamau district, himself a Muslim, contributed an account of social developments among various Hindu communities in that locality, which derived special interest from the circumstance that Palamau was one of the more backward areas of the province. He wrote:

> "Among other old castes and sects of the district there is indication of marked revival in Dusadhs, Telis, Kathars, Kurmis, Koiris, Ahirs, Dabgars, Kharwars, Rochbandhias, Gours and Chamars, who are all heart and soul trying for the uplift of their respective casts and sects, most of them by accepting the sacred thread of the Hindus in 3 prabars or knots instead of 5 prabars of the higher class of the Hindus. They are all returning to the Sanuatan Dharam under the influence of the Brahmin priests, or imbibing the ideas of the Aryas under their leaders residing in Gaya, Monghyr, Shahabad, Sasaram, Benares and elsewhere. The leaders occasionally are invited in their Sabhas."

A study of various caste Sabhas is necessary to examine the class consciousness among the depressed classes of people of Bihar.

Ahirs: The Goalas asserted their right to wear the sacred thread, refused to do any begari, to sell their produces except at privileged rates or to allow their women folk to go to bazars to sell milk. The object of anti-Goala Movement which followed in its wake was purely

retaliatory and in pursuance of its objects Goalas who refused to sell milk in the bazars were to be deprived of the services of barbers, washermen and midwives and their cattle were not allowed to graze on the Zamindar's waste lands. This opposition only served to make the Goalas more determined than ever. The only movement which had any organization, however, was that of the Goalas, whose agitation extended to almost every district. A congress of Goalas known as the "Gope Jageya Sabha" was called in April, 1923 where different schemes for the advancement of the caste were projected. The District Magistrate of Muzaffarpur reported: "The caste movement among the Goalas due to insistence of their right to wear sacred thread was spreading in 1923". All India Yadav Mahasabha was held at Purnea on 20th April, 1924 under the Presidentship of Choudhary Badan Sinha, M.L.C. of Badan. The audience numbered 2,500 including 500 delegates from every province. Inside the Hindu community, the efforts of the lower castes to improve their status led to considerable opposition and occasional disturbances. The Goalas had arranged to hold the Annual Meeting of their Sabha or caste association in a village near Kiul Junction on the East Indian Railways in 1925. The Bhumihars of the locality were determined to break up the gathering by force. A large mob armed with lethal weapons assembled, overpowering and seriously injuring a small squad of police. The police, when actually set on by the mob, were compelled to fire with the result that several persons were killed and a large number wounded. For some years the Ahirs or Goalas, who formed the largest single caste in the province and especially prided on their relationship with Krishan, the Kurmis and a few others had been combining to improve their social position.

Dusadhs: They too assumed the sacred thread, called themselves offsprings of Dushashan of Hindu mythology. Their number was increasing. In one village of Palamau

alone, there were about 20 houses of these Dusadhs, who constructed houses 10 to 12 feet high of masonry construction. It was told that they abstained from drink, meat and murghi (chickens) and had gone so far as to disallow sagai marriage of widows. Brahman zamindars (the Shukuls of the village) were poor and could not do anything except murmur at their influence and evolution.

Telis: They also had accepted the sacred thread and inaugurated local sabhas. They attended their caste sabha in the neighbouring northern district of Palamau, subscribed regularly to their "fund" and had a monthly magazine of their own, *"The Sahu Mitra"*. Most of them, being wealthy Mahajans, got themselves returned as Kamalapuri Vaishya or Jaunpuri Vaishya in the census of 1921. There were about 200 of them in Palamau and the number was increasing.

Kahars: They had largely accepted the sacred thread, and called themselves Chattris by changing their usual old epithet of "Ram" to "Singh". They also got their caste monthly magazine called *"Chattriaon"* from Shahabad. They claimed they were of "Kuru Bans".

Kurmis: A Kurmi conference was held at Harnaut in Patna district at the end of December, 1934. The same remarks as of Kahar applied to the Kurmis of the Hussainabad police station, who were about 10 in number. They said they were of "Kuru Bans".

Koiris: A meeting of Koiris was held on 7th October, 1919 in Katra Mandal, Bagjafar Khan Police Station, Malsalami. Since 1925-26 their movement, under their influential leaders from Gaya and Shahabad, had exhibited a marked revival in the police stations of Manatu, Panki and Patan. They had then a wide distribution of pamphlets and leaflets, describing the Koiris as a sect of Chattris, under the old names "Dangi" or "Dani" Chattri. They had largely accepted; the sacred thread, and had been wearing

churi bracelets instead of the battisi or bell-metal bracelets of lowest castes.

Dabgars: They were originally cobblers, residing mostly in Nagarutari, Garhwa and Hussainabad police stations in Palamau. There was a marked revival among them owing to their contact with "Kasarwani Nanakshahis" in Sasaram and Garhwa, and from the last five or six years before 1931 they were becoming "Nanakshahis". They dealt also in a very valuable commodity indigeneous in this district called Goulochan. There was unrest for amelioration of their conditions.

Kharwars: They were originally aboriginals, and started wearing sacred threads from last twenty-five years since 1931, and they were very active (with the Tana Bhagats in South Palamau) in cow-worship, under the two leaders of the Tanas and Bengali Brahman priests of Kuru in Ranchi. They were about 100, out of a large number of the old type.

Rochbandhias: They were mostly in Panki and Manatu police stations, who manufactured roch, a part or weaving apparatus of handloom of the Jolahas under the leadership of Muhammadan peers. They had embraced Islam. But they were still untouchable; although there was no untouchability in Islam. The Jolahas still disliked eating with them.

Gours: It was an untouchable caste of cattle-dealers in police station Mauatu, who generally took their wives from among the Rochbandhias in exchange of cattle and she-buffaloes and had embraced Islam. They were distinct from Hindu Gours that were included in the category of Kandus.

Chamars: Those village agricultural labourers, who had left work and had returned from Calcutta, and happened to come in contact with the Sahebganj Chamar Sabha in the district of the Santal Parganas, were instrumental in making some effort inducing their castes

to attend the usual Sahebganj Sabha for the amelioration of their caste. They desired to be called "Randas" instead of Chamar, and related various anecdotes in explanation of the Randas epithet, one outcaste Brahmin of the "Ram Avatar" period. The annual Ravidas conference of the Chamars was held on 15 and 16 of April, 1939 at Amari, P.S., Nasirganj. Resolutions advocating social, economic and political uplift of the community were passed. The Third Bihar Provincial Ravidas Conference and Shahabad Scheduled Castes Conference were held simultaneously at Attaon Police Station in Dumraon, on the 13th, 14th and 15th May, 1939. About 700 people attended the conference which was addressed by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the All India Congress President, Shri Jaglal Choudhary, Minister for Excise and Public Health, Babu Jagjiwan Ram, Parliamentary Secretary, and others.

Barhais, Lohars and Sonars: The Sonars of the district of Palamau had their sacred thread for twenty years since 1931. But the Barhais and Lohars had accepted it only since 1931 and they called themselves offsprings of Vishvakarma, the great architect and painter of the Mahabharat period. They had made a temple of their own in villages Nunia and Singra police station in Daltonganj, where they worshipped the great Vishvakarma on Basant Panchami Day every year.

Bhuiyas: In Palamau district they were numerous and they predominated all other castes. Most of the old intelligent Bhuiya labourers and Kamias, who were in close touch with their zamindars and moneylenders of higher Hindu castes, during the courses of Sub-Deputy Collector's Kamisuti Enquiries in 1931 expressed their earnest desire that they should have their Sabhas like Oraons, Mundas, Kahars and Koiries for long, and also accepted the sacred thread like their neighbouring brothers, the "Bhumihars" of Ranchi. They said it was their

poverty that came in the way so long from progressing on the same line with Dusadhs and Kahars. This gives a vivid proof that they were alive to the causes that in future would lead them onwards in all walks of life. They preferred to be called Rikhiasans in place of Bhuiyas, or the sons of the old Saints and "Rishis".

All the movements and sabhas in Palamau district, mostly from 1924 up to 1931, had been for social evolution mainly on the basis of religious ideas, for adoption of the customs and rituals of the higher class of the Hindus by accepting sacred thread and adding "Singh" or "Sarmaji" to their names and abolishing the habits of drink, eating fowls and meat, and so on. They were only more anxious for the change of the names of their castes and sects than the formation of a new sect altogether. A similar trend was also visible in other parts of Chotanagpur.

The Superintendent of Police, Ranchi, reported on 25th October, 1919 that Anta and Maisa Oraons of Nagpur Police Station in Serai visited Kasipara in Gumla Police Station and invested several Oraons with the sacred thread. The eating of flesh and drinking of spirit were prohibited and many aborigines from northern parts of Ranchi district rushed to the markets and disposed of their goat and sheep for fabulously low prices. The price of goat's meat fell in Ranchi from 12 to 4 annas a seer. Pigs were sold in some localities at cheap rates at the instigation of Hindus in February, 1921.

A number of caste sabhas were also held to ameliorate and improve social conditions, economic development and educational condition of the community in the high as well as lower castes. Bhumihar Brahman Sabha, Bengali Settlers Association, Maithil Mahasabha, Sanatan Dharm Sabha. Provincial Kshatriya Upkarini Sabha, Marwari Association, Kayastha Conference and Kumbhkar Sabha undertook the task of modernisation of the society. These

organisations were trying to bring about social changes among various communities. They became, in course of time, agencies of social changes among different sections of people.

Festivals

Many festivals were celebrated by the people of every religion. Most important of the Hindu festivals were Ramnavami, Janmastami, Durga Puja, Lakshmi Puja (Deepawali), Chhata, Kartik Purnima, Saraswati Puja, Shivaratri and Holi.

Muslims Festivals: The Muslims celebrated Muharram, Fatihadauz-dahum, Shabe Barat, Id and Bakrid.

Sikh Festivals: The Sikhs celebrated Birthdays of Guru Nanak Dev and Guru Gobind Singh.

Jain Festivals: The Jains celebrated the birth and Nirvana aniversaries of their Tirthankaras particularly Parashvanath and Mahavira. Their other important festivals were Paryushan (the last ten days of Bhadra) and Ashtanlika (the last eight days of Kartik). On these occasions the orthodox among them kept fast, worshipped in their temples and recited or listened to Jain scriptures.

Buddhist Festivals: The Buddhists celebrated Buddha Purnima.

Christian Festivals: The Christians celeberated Christmas and Easter.

Languages

There were many languages spoken or written in Bihar between the two world wars. They could be grouped according to Imperial Table XV, the Languages of India, under the following heads: (i) Indo-Aryan Languages, (ii) Munda Languages. (iii) Dravidian Languages and (iv) Other Languages of India.

This classification, though convenient, was not strictly logical. According to Sir George Grierson's Linguistic Survey of the Languages and Dialects of India, there were 872 such languages and dialects in India which (with the exception of a few unclassed languages) were divided into six main language families: (i) Austric; (ii) Tibeto-Chinese; (iii) Karon; (iv) Mo; (v) Dravidian; and (vi) Indo-European.

In 1921, the Sub-Divisional Officer of Kishanganj expressed the view that a pure Hindi speaker would be more at home in this area than a speaker of pure Bengali. According to the Linguistic Survey, Hindustani was a dialect of Western Hindi which was a language falling in the central group of the inner sub-branch of Indo-Aryan branch of languages, and Urdu was simply one form of the Hindustani dialect. The language spoken by the majority was really Bihari, which fell in the eastern group of the outer sub-branch of the Indo-Aryan branch. Bihari again was sub-divided into three main dialects *viz.* Maithili, Magahi and Bhojpuri, and these in their turn had various forms and sub-dialects.

Since the tribal languages were different they need a separate analysis. They were as varied as the other languages of India.

Tribal Languages: A Santal might speak his tribal language in the midst of his family, but in the bazar or in every day conversation with non-Santals he would often speak Hindustani or whatever happened to be the lingua-franca of the countryside. In this respect the languages treated as 'Tribal' which comprised the Munda branch of the Austro-Asiatic languages and an intermediate group of the same family, had not been so treated.

A list of the tribal languages tabulated in the census of 1931 is given on Table 6.3.

Table 6.3: Tribal Languages in Bihar

Munda Language				*Dravidian Languages*
Agaria	Gadaba	Kora	Savara	Gondi
Asuri	Ho	Korwa	Turi	Kandhi (Kui)
Bhumij	Karmali	Mahili		Malhar
Birhor	Kharia	Mundari		Maho
Birjia	Juang	Santhali		Oraon (Kurukh)

Gipsy Language: Four Gipsy languages mentioned in the Census of 1931 were Domra, Gulgulia, Malar and Nati. Only 687 persons in all spoke these languages.

In Bihar the common language was Hindi, while the people of Chotanagpur plateau spoke a number of non-Aryan languages such as Ho, Oraon and Mundas, though most of them also spoke Hindi. To improve the languages in the province there were various regional and provincial parishads working: such as Maithili Sahitya Parishad. Sahitya Parishad, Patna College Banga Sahitya Samiti, Bihar and Orissa Sanskrit Association, and Bihar Provincial Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. Hence Bihar presented a complex picture of linguistic distribution. Few provinces in India could show such variations in language and dialects as Bihar. The linguistic variations had been as rigid as the caste complex. However, Hindi remained the dominant language and formed the major basis of social and cultural unity.

POSITION OF WOMEN

In India the natural instinct to marry and beget children had been encouraged by the teachings of religion. To the Hindus, marriage was a sacrament and a religious duty incumbent on all and a man must marry and bring children into the world for the salvation of his own soul and his ancestors. Marriage customs among the Hindus continued

to be what they were during the earlier periods. Marriage was one of the twelve purificatory rites which a Hindu must perform. In some cases, different rules affected the field of match-making. One such rule restricted the circle within which a man must marry. Every person had to marry within his own sub-caste. In caste where there were 'Gotras' (traditional common ancestors), Gotra exogamy was generally the rule. But this was common only among the Brahmins, Rajputs and other high caste Hindus. In some cases, marriage was not allowed within the same village. But the most prevalent rule of exogamy was sapinda (of the same blood) by which marriage was prohibited between parties who had common ancestors up to seven or five generations, seven being on the father's side and five or three generations on the mother's side. Many instances were found of Hindus marrying girls belonging to inferior social groups with in the same caste according to the principle of hypergamy.

To the Muhammadans, marriage was a civil contract of legal validity according to which it was only necessary that there should be a proposal and acceptance made at the same meeting with a view to establishing marital relations between the parties. The universal practice was, however, that the proposal and acceptance were to be made at a formal gathering of relatives and friends called the Nikah ceremony at which passages from the Koran were also read and prayer was offered.

Similarly among the Christians a religious ceremony, though legally not binding, was in practice more or less on this basis.

Of the Christians and generally the "Animists" also it might be said that a religious ceremony was an essential part of marriage.

Marriage, funeral and other ceremonies remained much the same as in the last few decades.

Polygamy: Theoretically, the Hindus could marry any number of wives, but in practice it was rare. Certain people of the higher castes only could afford to have more than one wife. Babhans might marry two sisters and the number of wives depended upon their ability to maintain them. Kulin Brahmins sometimes married many wives and visited each of them only three or four times in one's life time. The Indians, in general, possessed a very fair character. Women were the priestess and mistress of the home. The Dahanuks of Purnea accepted no limit to the number of wives.

The Muslims were permitted to have as many as four wives at a time. However, polygamy could not be said to be common in Bihar. The vast majority of people were monogamous. Polygamy was troublesome as it led to quarrels in the family. Although polygamy was actually countenanced in both religious communities (Hindu and Muslim) in practice it was extremely rare. Still the law which permitted polygamy was a sword of Damocles hanging over the heads of Indian Wives.

System of concubine

Some rich Hindus, as well as Muslims, maintained concubines, whose ranks were replenished from various professional castes, widows, adulteresses, maid servants and so on. Many Rajputs, Khatris and Kayasthas who openly kept women of any caste, but not in their homes, were called 'Krishne pakehis'. It is difficult to have a clear statistics of such persons of mixed marriages.

Divorce: The Hindu Law did not recognise divorce, though it was recognised by custom in certain localities and among certain castes usually through the intervention of a panchayat. Divorce, however, was not a common feature amongst the Hindus. Thus, Hindu Law did not recognise divorce at all but was sanctioned by custom in certain

localities and among certain castes only usually in the lower strata of the Hindu society.

The Muhammadan Law permitted divorce, either by the decree of a court at the suit of a husband or wife or by a mutual consent of husband and wife or by the act of any husband. But in practice it was believed to be rare. Among the aboriginal tribes it was generally recognized. But in all such cases divorce was always followed by remarriage, and its influence on the statistics of widows was difficult to retain.

The Christians also accepted and enforced the system of divorce in accordance with the norms of their religious denominations. Hence it can fairly be said that divorce did not form an essential part of the Hindu society. It was, however, a common practice among the Muslims, Christians, Tribal population and lower strata of the Indian society.

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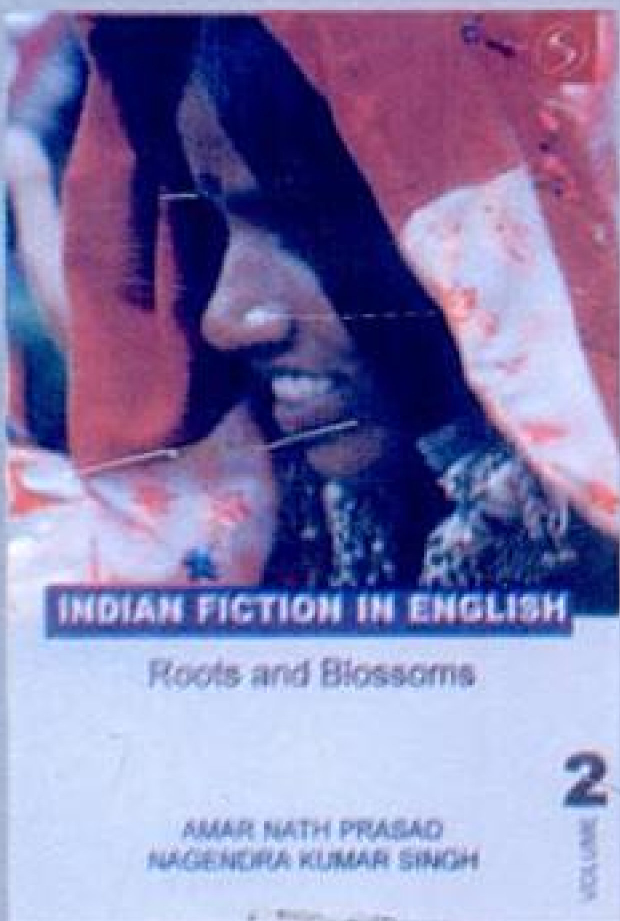
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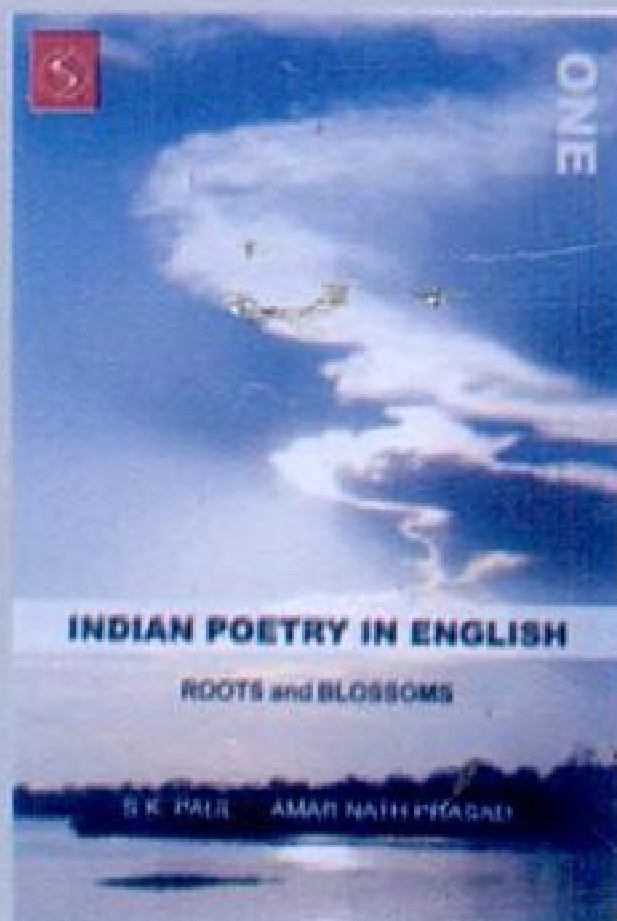
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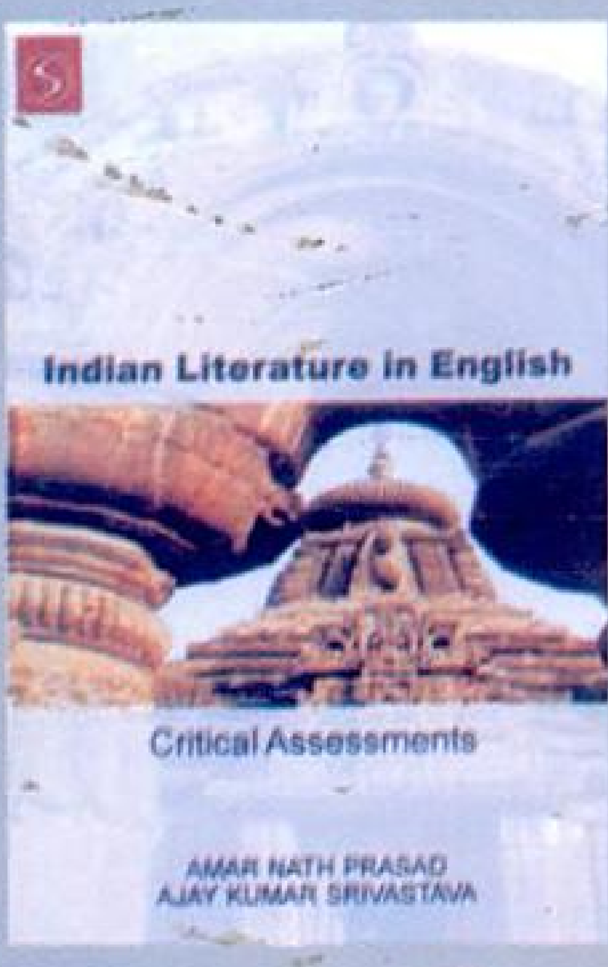
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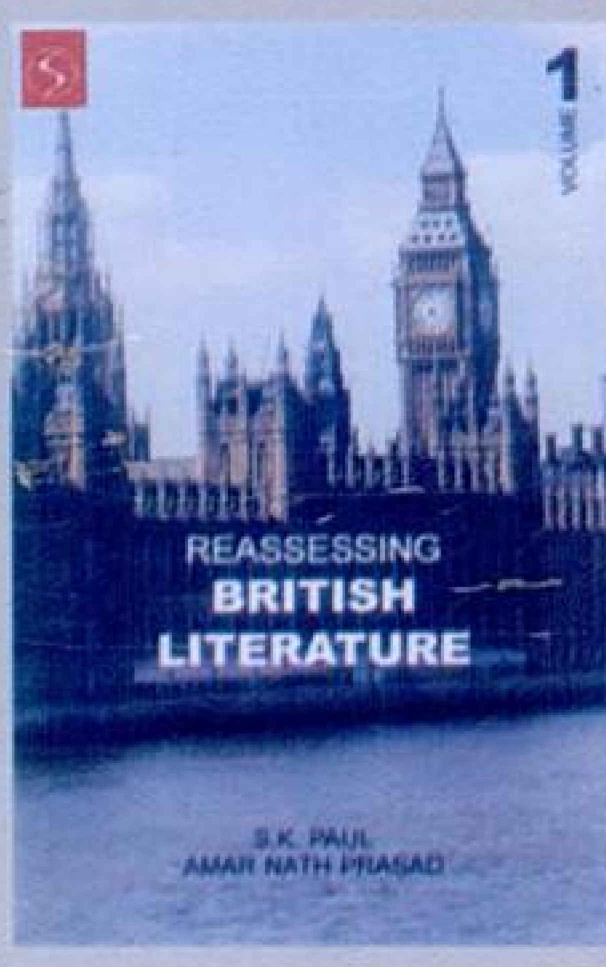
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